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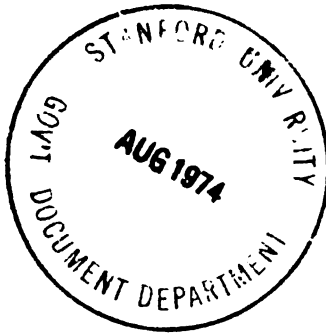
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NON - CIRCULATING

THE
Parliamentary Register;

OR,

AN IMPARTIAL REPORT

OF THE

D E B A T E S

THAT HAVE OCCURRED IN THE

TWO HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT,

IN THE COURSE OF

The Second Session of the Second Parliament of the United
Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

VOL. II.

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VOL. II. 1803-4.

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THE

THE
PARLIAMENTARY REGISTER,

DURING THE SECOND SESSION OF THE SECOND PARLIAMENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

FRIDAY, MARCH 9.

SHORTLY after the meeting took place, and previously to the temporary adjournment of the House, for the purpose of affording time to the Lords Commissioners to robe,

Earl Fitzwilliam rose, and addressed several observations to the House relative to the state of his Majesty's health, with a reference to the important proceeding then about to take place. He observed, that he had reason for entertaining doubts that the state of the Sovereign's health was such as to militate, in some degree, against the exercise of that very important part of the Royal functions, which he understood was about to be acted upon. He spoke upon an authority on which he thought he could rely. His Lordship made a variety of observations upon the reports made by the Royal physicians at different times, and argued from the general tenor of such as he alluded to, that the Sovereign was not in a state of actual convalescence. The reports seemed in his idea rather calculated to flatter the expectations of the public, nor were any hopes of a speedy recovery held out. In the course of his observations, his Lordship alluded to the bulletin of that day. As the subject struck his mind, upon every thing he had observed or could collect, he was led to entertain doubts which induced him to call upon the noble Lord upon the woolsack for further information relative to the very important point in question.

The *Lord Chancellor*, in answer to what had fallen from the noble Earl, observed, that for any proposition coming
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from such a quarter, he entertained the highest respect; indeed upon such a very important topic, observations coming from any individual Peer in that House were entitled to the most serious attention. With respect to the doubts entertained by the noble Earl, he could assure his Lordship and the House, that in every thing connected with so grave, important, and momentous an occasion as that in question, he had proceeded with all that delicacy, deliberation, and caution which was evidently required; he had proceeded on the occasion even with fear and trembling: to speak more specifically to the point, he observed, that not satisfied with the reports and assurances of the medical attendants of his Majesty on so important an occasion, he thought it proper and necessary to have a personal interview with the Sovereign, and at which due discussion took place as to the bills which were offered for the Royal assent, and which was fully expressed. He would sooner suffer his right hand to be severed from his body, than in such an instance he would agree to act upon light or superficial grounds. He thought it his bounden and indispensable duty, and which he trusted he always should conscientiously discharge, to proceed in the manner he had stated: and he had no hesitation to aver, that the result of all that took place upon the occasion, fully and amply justified him in announcing his Majesty's assent to the bills specified in the Royal Commission. He knew and felt with gratitude his obligations to the best of Sovereigns, and to whose person he bore the warmest affection: but he could most conscientiously say, that no considerations whatever, even those to which he had alluded, should ever induce him to break that sacred covenant he had made with himself, not to suffer any thing to warp his judgment, or to bias him from that rule of strict duty and rectitude which he was determined to follow. He entertained no doubt of the noble Earl's having come forward upon a sense of duty, and that he was actuated by nothing personal to himself upon the occasion. He was fully aware of the high degree of responsibility under which he stood, and with reference to which he had acted.

The Lords Commissioners afterwards (namely, the Lord Chancellor, Lord Hawkesbury, and Lord Auckland) retired to robe; and when they had taken their seats in the front of the throne, the Commons were sent for, and appearing at the bar, the Royal assent was declared in the usual form to the Irish Bank restriction bill, the two mutiny bills, the seed corn exportation, the Greenland whale fishery, the London

don port, the Scotch creditors, and the Duke of York's estate bills, and to a few private bills.

After the Commons had retired, their Lordships forwarded the bills which remained upon the table, chiefly of a private or local description, after which the House adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

FRIDAY, MARCH 9.

The Speaker having been in the House of Peers, informed the House that the Royal assent had been given by commission to the two mutiny bills, the corn exportation bill, the Duke of York's estate bill, the Irish Bank restriction bill, the Greenland ships' bill, the Scotch creditors' bill, and to several other bills.

Mr. H. Addington moved, that it be an instruction to the Committee, appointed to consider of a speedy and effectual mode to settle differences subsisting between the masters and workmen in the cotton manufactories, that they may take such measures as may be necessary for preventing such differences in future, and report the matter, together with their opinion thereupon, to the House. Agreed.

He then moved, that the several proceedings of the House in the last Session of Parliament upon that subject be referred to the said Committee. Ordered.

Sir John Anderson brought up the report of Mr. Alderman Boydell's lottery bill: the amendments were read and agreed to, and the bill was ordered to be ingrossed.

Mr. Ormsby brought up a report on the petition of the Superintending Magistrate of the Police of Dublin, which being read, he moved, that leave be given to bring in a bill to provide for defraying the expence of preserving the peace of the city of Dublin. Leave given.

Sir W. Pulteney moved for leave to bring in a bill for increasing the capital of the Bank of Scotland. Granted.

The bill for regulating the age at which persons are to be admitted into holy orders in Ireland, was read a third time and passed.

IRISH DUTIES.

Mr. Corry moved the order of the day for going into a Committee on the Irish duties bill.

Colonel Hutchinson said it was not his intention to oppose the motion of the right hon. Gentleman, but he could not avoid making a few observations upon the schedule before the House. He was willing to pay every tribute to the

right hon. Gentleman, the Chancellor of the Exchequer of Ireland, for the candid and liberal manner in which he had conducted himself upon this occasion, but he was sorry to find that the four per cent. duty, upon Irish exports, was to be continued upon every part of the exports of Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman had himself acknowledged, on a former occasion, that the provision trade of Ireland was in a languishing condition, and he thought that was a sufficient reason why it should be exempt from the general export duty. He then adverted to the tax upon leather, which, he said, had been laid on under an idea that it would not exceed one penny per pound, but in fact it was considerably more. Another subject to which he wished to call the attention of the House, because it materially concerned his constituents, was the duty upon foreign herrings imported into Ireland. He did not mean to propose that the duty should be taken off, but he wished that a full drawback should be granted when they were re-exported, otherwise the trade would be thrown into foreign hands. He was anxious to press this subject upon the consideration of the House, and the right hon. Gentleman, because it materially affected the trade of the city he had the honour to represent.

Mr. Carr said, that with regard to the export tax upon linen, considering it as he did as a war tax, he should certainly not oppose it; but he wished the right hon. Gentleman to advert to one circumstance, which he considered as bearing hard upon Ireland. By the articles of union, if there was a surplus of any foreign article in either Great Britain or Ireland, it might be exported to the other with a full drawback of the duty: but if a merchant in Ireland wished to export tobacco, for instance, to England, he could only do it in vessels of a certain size: this appeared to him to be an impediment upon trade. With regard to the window tax, when it was laid on in Ireland, it was always considered as a war tax, though now it was made a permanent one.

Mr. John Latouche adverted to the state of the exchange between Great Britain and Ireland, and said it was a subject that called for the immediate attention of Parliament. With regard to the schedule before the House, the right hon. Gentleman had certainly attended with the utmost candour to the representations of the merchants upon the subject, and in most instances their wishes were complied with; in others, however, they were not. There were two articles particularly

particularly upon which he thought a reduction of duty ought to take place, and they were foreign oils and foreign hops; the latter he conceived ought to be admitted to be imported free of duty.

Sir John Newport also expressed his thanks to the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer of Ireland, for the attention he bestowed upon every suggestion or objection that was made to him. But there were some points in which he still did not approve of this schedule. In the first place, he agreed with the hon. Gentleman (*Mr. Hutchinson*), with regard to what he had said about the importation of foreign herrings; but the subject to which he wished principally to advert, was the importation of the article of deals into Ireland. He was sorry to find there was an increased duty upon that article. The peasantry of Ireland had of late expressed a wish to have their cottages slated instead of thatched; this disposition he thought ought to be encouraged, because he knew that several villages were forced into the rebellion, by the threat of having their cottages burnt, which could be easily accomplished while they were covered with thatch. He therefore hoped that this duty would not be encreased.

Mr. Hawthorne approved of the schedule in general, but wished merely to advert to the increased duty on grocers' licences. He did not know upon what ground that duty had been increased, and he did not think if it was persisted in, that it would be productive of any increase of revenue.

Mr. Corry, after expressing the satisfaction he felt at the approbation which had been expressed of his conduct by so many Members from that part of the united kingdom, proceeded to answer the different objections which had been made. He said that though these duties were now to be voted without limitation, they would of course be liable hereafter to revision, alteration, or repeal; and therefore he hoped that no apprehension would be entertained upon the idea that these taxes were to be voted permanently. Another observation he wished to make was, that all the duties laid on in Ireland, to correspond with war duties laid on in this country, would of course cease as soon as the war ceased, and the duties were taken off in this country. With regard to the provision trade of Ireland, it certainly did languish, but he hoped it was only for a time; the fact was, that the war demand had ceased, and the peace demand had not begun, which was a reason for a temporary diminution of the trade: but he had no doubt but that would soon revive, particularly

particularly as there was a large army maintained in Ireland and a large fleet on the coast, and the consumption of provisions by them would at least compensate for the temporary decrease of foreign trade. With regard to the drawbacks on sugar, they certainly ought to be the same in both countries, and if there were instances in which from any mistake they were not so, they would be rectified. With respect to the leather trade, he did not conceive that any reduction of the duty was necessary, because it had continued to prosper, and he believed those who were engaged in it were perfectly satisfied. As to the duty upon the importation of foreign herrings, he could not agree with the hon. Gentleman that it ought to be reduced; the duty was 6s. 7d a barrel, and under that duty the trade had increased, and he was sure it would not be denied that Parliament ought to adopt every means to encourage our own fisheries. With regard to tobacco, the reason why it could only be shipped on board vessels of a certain size was, because it was necessary, in order to prevent its being smuggled into the little creeks and harbours of Ireland, in small vessels which the Custom-house cutters could not follow. He then proceeded shortly to advert to the other objections which had been made to the schedule, but contended that they were not such as ought to induce the House to lower the duties.

Mr. Dawson observed, that the window tax, which, at the time it was laid on, was professed to be a war tax, appeared in the bill before the House among the permanent taxes. This tax the hon. Member recollected to have been said, at its introduction, to be pointed particularly at the disaffected; for it was remarked, that as they were not of that description of persons who would contribute to the exigencies of the State, by any tax on wine, &c. they must be made to pay for their light: and the House would no doubt be surprised to hear, that this tax on light was much beyond the rate then levied by a similar tax in this country. The hon. Member was particularly emphatic in expressing his disapprobation of the tax on the export of Irish linen, which he considered to be a violation of the letter and spirit of the union; and a full confirmation of the predictions so often delivered by the adversaries of that measure, previous to its enactment; that whenever the interests of the two countries should happen to come into competition, the one hundred representatives for Ireland would avail very little, however well-disposed towards their native country, against the five hundred and fifty-eight Members who are immediately interested in the concerns of Great Britain.

The

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* thought it right to have it recorded on the face of the bill, that the war taxes which had been imposed in Ireland should cease with the duration of the corresponding taxes which existed in this country. He vindicated his right hon. Friend (Mr. Corry) from the imputation of neglecting the interests of the trade of Ireland; and, in proof of his attention to that subject, mentioned, that the increased duty, which in the course of the last session had been imposed on German linen imported into this country, was laid on in consequence of the suggestion of his right hon. Friend, that it was material to the protection and encouragement of the linen-trade of Ireland. This additional tax on German linen, the right hon. Gentleman stated to have excited so much discontent among the importers, that he had reason to believe that before the expiration of the present session, an application would be made to the House, by petition from these importers, to have this duty reduced.

Mr. Corry said, that he had had it in contemplation to make a proposition in the Committee, respecting the war taxes, to the effect recommended by his right hon. Friend.

Mr. Vansittart spoke generally in favour of the bill.

Mr. G. Ponsonby saw no ground for acceding to the additional tax upon Irish linen. No Committee had been instituted to ascertain how far it was just or necessary. The House had nothing to proceed upon in justification of the measure, but the assertion of the right hon. Gentleman. As to the comparison made between the linen of Ireland and England, the fair mode of considering the question was, whether both countries were equally fit to bear the proposed tax. The reason assigned by the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in support of this equal tax as he termed it, appeared to him to be very extraordinary indeed, viz. that it would be unfair that if Irish and English linen should be shipped in the same ship, the one should be subject to the tax, and the other exempt from it. Then if that were to be the criterion, it seemed, if those goods were carried in different ships, the complaint of inequality in taxation would disappear. The learned Member recommended, for the sake of clearness, and for the satisfaction of the House, that the right hon. Member should draw up two separate schedules, in the one of which should be classed such taxes as were meant to be permanent ones; and in the other the taxes which were to cease at the expiration of the war.

Mr. Alexander said, it would be impossible that even England itself, with its great capital, would be able to rival the north
of

of Ireland in the linen trade, it was so firmly established in that article of commerce.

Mr. Foster referred to a former period, at which the Irish Parliament had succeeded in forcing the Irish linens into the Spanish market, by voting a bounty of 5 per cent. on exportation to that country. By a similar train of reasoning, he supposed that the imposition of a duty of 3 per cent. might tend to prevent it from going into any foreign market. He considered the bill as operating unfairly in two ways, the one by making permanent several laws which heretofore were only annual, and the other by depriving his Majesty of a considerable portion of hereditary revenue, without any intimation to the House of his having acceded to such a measure.

Mr. Pitt said, he certainly was not aware of the objection which had been made by the right hon. Gentleman who spoke last : he was not then prepared to give a decided opinion upon the subject, but he was prepared to say, that from such an objection coming from such a quarter, the House ought not to proceed without very maturely considering the subject. If the right hon. Gentleman was not mistaken in the objection he had made (and he should be surprised indeed if he were mistaken) if the bill now before the House went to produce that effect, and there was no message from the Crown to authorize that proceeding, it was undoubtedly a breach of the proceedings and constitution of Parliament, and one that should not, and he hoped would not, be passed over lightly.

Mr. Corry was about to proceed in further explanation, and to add some further arguments, when he was interrupted by

Mr. Foster, who called to order, saying, that by explanation he understood that a Member of Parliament was to explain what he meant by what he had already said, and not what he was going to say.

The *Speaker* observed, that if it was objected to, the right hon. Gentleman could not be allowed to go into argument upon a question to which he had already spoken, without the special leave of the House.

Mr. Corry said, that for obvious reasons, and out of respect to the House, he should certainly confine himself to explanation, and be very short : what he had to say arose out of the observations of a right hon. Gentleman, whom he never heard without great respect. He should, however, state how the matter stood. The Civil List was granted in Ireland in the 33d of the King, and these provisions which were now under discussion, were enacted in lieu of those duties which
subsisted

subsisted before that time. His Majesty having given up the receipts of his revenue, the hereditary duties to the Crown had merged during that time; but the right to them was not disturbed, but was to revive in full force at the expiration of the term for which the civil list was granted: thus it was, that from year to year the hereditary duties to the Crown remained as it were in abeyance, during the continuance of this arrangement between the Crown and the Public, but would revive again after the time had expired during which the agreement was in force. This bill was formed on the model of other bills which had passed from year to year in Ireland from that time, and this only to render permanent that system which had been adopted and annually passed in Ireland. The right of the Crown necessarily revives when the period arrived by which the arrangement was at an end; nor was there the least intention to the contrary. Thus the case stood on constitutional principles. Now, a certain portion of these duties was granted annually, some of which were now inserted in this bill, which was proposed to be permanent, and a certain portion was omitted in this bill, such as the land and malt, that was an annual measure yet; and with regard to the other duties, it was proposed that they should be permanent, and they were, the consolidated fund of Ireland, charged with the interest of the national debt, and also the civil list of his Majesty, and that of the proportion which Ireland was to bear of the contribution it was bound to make to the public burthen by the union, as well as all the pensions and other parliamentary payments that were to be made. He was not aware there was any thing in this bill, or that any thing would arise out of it, which would in any degree affect the hereditary revenues of the Crown, longer than had already, by the consent of the Crown, and by agreement between the Crown and the Public, been provided.

Mr. Foster said, he should also enter into a short explanation of what he had said, which he should do by way of reply to what had been stated by the right hon. Gentleman. He had just said, that on forming the consolidated fund of Ireland these hereditary revenues had been given up by his Majesty, by a gracious message, desiring that Parliament might bring them in the public aid, and dispose of them as Parliament should think proper, and that in lieu of them the Crown had a civil list. Now, this agreement could only be binding on the Crown during the existence of the right in his Majesty. His Majesty had only a life interest in these hereditary revenues; but what was to be the effect of this bill? It was that

of a perpetual disposal of these hereditary revenues of the Crown, not only during his Majesty's, but also during every reign to eternity. He would ask, if that was parliamentary? He would ask, was it constitutional to divest the Crown for ever of its rights, without any consent from the Crown, without even so much as a message from the Crown? This was a point too clear to enter largely into it, and therefore he should not trespass any longer on the patience of the House.

Lord Castlereagh said, he had not had an opportunity of reading this bill, and he had no means of knowing what it contained; but he did not apprehend it would have the effect stated by the right hon. Gentleman. However, if the words in the bill should be found to go further than his right hon. Friend apprehended and had stated, it would be for the House to consider it, when the clauses came to be read. The principle of the bill was clear; but as the interest of the Crown was concerned, it was important to take care that nothing should find its way into it by inadvertency, which might have the effect of disturbing the settlement made between the Crown and the Parliament of Ireland, on the hereditary revenues and the civil list, as it took place on the 33d of the King. Now how did it stand? The Irish Parliament, after this agreement with the Crown, provided that the duties given up by the Crown should be applied to the use of the Public for one year, and continued them from year to year, until they had been made permanent since the union; for the practice of the Parliament of Ireland was different from that of England in that respect. His right hon. Friend had said, that on public grounds it was expedient that these duties should continue in operation without a fresh arrangement every year; and this bill was only to render permanent, duties which were voted away by the Parliament of Ireland annually, since the 33d year of the present reign: it was a principle acted upon by the Crown ever since; nor was there the least idea that its operation should continue further than during the life of the Monarch now on the throne; it could not affect the rights of the Crown afterwards. But the right hon. Gentleman who spoke last, had said that it would be in operation during the succeeding reigns. Now, as he had not read the bill, he could not say what it contained, but if it had any provision which would so operate, that provision might be altered. The surrender of these duties, by agreement between the Crown and the Parliament, was absolute during the life of his present Majesty; and it was for the Parliament to consider whether the appropriation of them should be permanent, or only from year to year. He thought
that

that on sound principles of revenue they ought to be permanent, in order to give to the public creditor better security than could attend the passing of them to the public use annually. He believed that his right hon. Friend would be able to satisfy the jealousy of the House, that there was nothing in this bill to affect the interest of the Crown unfavourably, at least nothing that could not be altered to the satisfaction of the House in a Committee.

Mr. Rose wished to know whether there was in this bill any specific provision to shew that the hereditary revenues of the Crown shall revert to the Crown, when that period should occur when there was a demise of the Crown; for if there was no such provision in the bill, he doubted very much whether it should have come into the House at all; and he was sure that if not, the House ought not to go into a Committee upon it, at least until a message came to the House, from the Crown, desiring them to proceed upon such a measure. As to the malt duty in Ireland, which was still an annual vote, he did not know the amount of it so as to be able to judge of the check which Parliament retained in that respect upon the executive Government, by way of power to withhold the supplies from year to year. If the right hon. Gentleman could satisfy the House upon these two points he should be glad to hear him.

Mr. Corry said, that accounts had been kept of the hereditary revenues distinct from the others, and he was informed that the law officers in Ireland prepared a clause for the purpose of saving the rights of the Crown from every thing except the operation of the agreement between the Crown and the Parliament of Ireland, in the 33d of the King. Whether the mode which had been adopted for that purpose was such, was not for him to state; he knew that that principle had always been preserved, and had understood that the provisions were adequate to that purpose. That provision had always been inserted in every revenue bill since the agreement had been entered into between the Crown and the Parliament of Ireland, and he took it for granted that every thing would be adopted by the House that was necessary for perfect clearness. This bill was clearly of the form of the former bills, which contained a provision for saving the rights of the Crown. Here he read the provision out of the statute book in a former act of Parliament.

Mr. Foster asked if that provision was in the present bill?

Mr. Corry said, he had no doubt of it: the House would

consider how it was prepared. He had no doubt it was correct, though he had not had an opportunity of reading it; it was sent to him in the usual manner after it was drawn up by the law officers of the Crown. As to the amount of the duties proposed to be voted permanently, and those which were to be annual, the annual was above one-tenth of the whole.

Mr. Canning said that the first question now was not whether there was such a clause as that which was alluded to by the right hon. Gentleman, but whether, in fact, the House could do any thing further without further explanation, or whether indeed the right hon. Gentleman ought not to have been ready with his explanation before he came forward with his bill? The next question was, if there was not such a clause, what the House should allow to be done upon such a gross violation of form, and such a substantial objection in principle, so essential to the constitutional practice of the House, as occurred in this bill? He put it to the hon. Gentlemen who supported this defective bill, whether they should not think it more decorous in them to ask leave to withdraw this bill, and ask leave to present another less imperfect, as the best manner in which they could atone for the unconstitutional principle on which they had attempted to proceed in the House? It was now allowed, he said, on all hands, that this was a gross oversight at least; and he thought that going into a Committee to endeavour to cure the defect there would not be proper, because it would not sufficiently mark the sense of the House upon a proceeding so glaringly repugnant to its rules, and to one of the most important principles of the constitution.

Mr. Fox said, that if there was any foundation in point of fact in the objection, the House would not cure it in a Committee, because it could not, according to any rule of practice or principle of the constitution, go into a Committee at all upon the bill. It was not in the legal power of the House to proceed at all upon a bill of this kind without consent; here there was no pretence that any such consent was given. There could be no doubt whatever, that the House must negative the question that the Speaker do now leave the chair, for the House ought to wait at least until the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who brought in the bill, knew what it contained, before they proceeded to discuss it: the right hon. Gentleman would hardly ask the House until he himself had had an opportunity of reading it.

Lord

Lord Castlereagh was going to reply, when he was called to order by *Mr. Grey*.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer then rose, and was called to order by *Mr. Foster*.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said he rose for the purpose of making a motion, and he was at liberty to introduce that which he was about to say. He was desirous there should be no difficulty whatever in going upon this bill, and that no one should be called upon to proceed in the discussion of it, in a Committee, without knowing what its contents were; for that reason he should move that the House should resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House upon this bill the next day. If the bill was withdrawn altogether, there would of course be an end of it; otherwise he should negative the question of the Speaker leaving the chair, with a view to move afterwards that this bill be committed to a Committee of the whole House the next day.

Mr. Fox said, the right hon. Gentleman had claimed his right to be heard, on the ground that he was going to make a motion, the only ground on which he had any right to speak a second time in the debate: thus his claim was allowed in point of order, and yet after all, in point of fact, he did not make any motion, but only gave notice of a motion which he intended to make; and this was attended with additional irregularity; that he now negatived the question for the Speaker leaving the chair, after having once spoke for the Speaker leaving the chair. But he believed it would be of great use to some of his Majesty's Ministers, and particularly to the right hon. Gentleman, if they could change the rules of the House so that they might not only change their minds, but be allowed to deliver two opposite opinions in one night, upon one question in a debate.

Mr. Ormsby said, that he believed this bill was precisely on the same principle and condition as bills which had formerly passed upon the subject of these duties. He did not feel himself warranted to speak on this bill, not having read it since it was introduced into the House; all he knew was, that the subject to which it referred, was under discussion in Ireland, among the law officers of the Crown, of whom he had the honour to be one. He knew the discussion had been on the subject of the King's hereditary revenue; perhaps he might be out of order in stating what he was about to state, but he wished to draw the attention of the House to it. He then read the clause which had been inserted in other bills upon

upon this subject, to shew that the rights of the Crown had always been saved in them all, as far as related to the hereditary revenues of the Crown reverting after the termination of the agreement between the Crown and the Public in the 33d year of the present reign. It was for the House to consider whether the words in this clause were sufficient to save the rights of the Crown; he apprehended they were, and it had been so thought by the Crown lawyers in Ireland. But whether that clause was to be found in the present bill he would not undertake to say. The bill was in the hand-writing of two or three persons, and he took shame to himself that he had not read it since it was laid on the table of that House. All he could say was that the bill which was considered and perused by the Crown lawyers in Ireland, of which he presumed this to be a copy, had been by them deemed sufficient to preserve entire the rights of the Crown.

Mr. William Ponsonby said, he believed this bill contained no such clause as that which had been read by the learned Gentleman out of another act of Parliament. In a word, he knew of no way to proceed upon this business, but that of withdrawing the present bill to make way for a better.

The question was then put, that the Speaker do now leave the chair, and negatived.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer then moved, that the House should the next day resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House upon the bill.

Mr. Pitt said, he was extremely glad that an opportunity had been given to examine into this question; but it was matter of regret that the attention of the House had not been called to this important circumstance before any progress whatever had been made in the bill, for nothing could be more important for that House to attend to than the hereditary revenues of the Crown, and that the more especially, when the measure brought forward was without the consent of the Crown, and without an opportunity of discussing the contents of the bill. He was very far from pledging himself as to the opinion he should have on this occasion; but after what he had heard from the honourable Gentleman below him, he had great doubts indeed whether, if the clauses in this bill were, as he had stated them to be, out of another bill, the objection to this measure would be removed, for they only related to a part of his Majesty's revenue, instead of the whole: if so, the defect was radical; for it was a clause by which

which a stated sum was to be perpetual, and set off against a perpetual revenue of a given value some years ago, but capable of increase with the increasing prosperity of the general revenue of the empire; for during the happy period of his Majesty's reign, from that time to the present, that revenue had increased to several hundred thousand pounds, and that revenue now was much higher than the civil list for which it had been exchanged. By this enactment therefore, to appropriate in perpetuity the hereditary revenues of the Crown, Parliament would be doing neither more nor less than this—to abolish his Majesty's inherent claim to a permanent improveable revenue, and giving for it a fixed unimproveable sum, and that too, without any consent or intimation on the part of the Crown. If this was the case, and nothing had been said to induce him to doubt it, he could not help saying, it was very unfortunate that the attention of the House had not been called to it before any progress was made in the bill; for it was matter of great importance, upon the constitutional principle, that the hereditary revenues of the Crown should not be taken away by Parliament without the consent of the Crown: that was a principle which it was impossible to be the wish of any of the King's Ministers to neglect, and quite as little could it be the wish of any Member of that House.

The question was then put and carried that the House should the next day resolve itself into the said Committee.

MILITIA OF IRELAND.

Mr. Foster said, that some days ago he mentioned a matter of serious moment to Ireland, which was, an apparent breach of faith of Parliament with the militia of Ireland. In November the militia were embodied in Ireland by order of the Lord Lieutenant; they were embodied by the existing law; by that law each militiaman who provided for his relatives was to have 2s. per week for his wife, and 1s. for his father, mother, or child, if they were maintained by him. In August following, this law was repealed, by which these 2s. were reduced to 1s. The militia had been embodied under the faith of the first, and no compensation was given to them for the reduction. This was a breach of faith, at which the militia murmured very much; he had letters informing him of much discontent upon this occasion, nor would he be answerable for the consequences, if some measure was not taken; and if taken at all, it must be taken before the assizes, which are now approaching, otherwise it would be too late.

Mr.

Mr. Secretary Yorke admitted the difficulty stated by the right hon. Gentleman, and should call the attention of the House to it; but the Chief Secretary of the Lord Lieutenant had brought the bill forward. He had not yet had an opportunity of considering that subject, but in a few days he should come forward with an amendment to the bill, or a separate bill for that purpose.

LORD KILWARDEN'S FAMILY.

Mr. George Ponsonby asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it was intended to take any step towards making provision for the family of the late Lord Kilwarden. It was now near eight months since the tragical event happened, by which he was destroyed. His family were not in affluent circumstances, and the consideration of the manner in which he came to his untimely and lamented fate, and the recollection of his virtues, made this a matter of great concern. He thought that no time should be lost in making an adequate provision for his family; and he was sure every loyal man in the empire would feel the necessity of this attention on the part of Government.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that this subject was one on which his Majesty's Servants had not been inattentive, and he believed the attention of the House would be called to it in the course of a few days.

NAVAL DEFENCE.

Mr. Pitt gave notice that he should, on Thursday next, move for some information relative to the state of the naval defence of this country.

HIS MAJESTY'S HEALTH.

Mr. Grey—I wish to say a very few words, on a subject which appears to me to be of the utmost importance. The attention of the House has this day been necessarily called, by witnessing in the House of Lords an instance of the personal exercise of an act of authority from the King. Sir, the inference naturally drawn from that act of authority, so exercised, is undoubtedly of the most satisfactory nature. It would indeed be completely satisfactory to me, if I were assured by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (*Mr. Addington*), that the act was done in full health, which its publicity indicates, and without which such an act of authority ought not to have been exercised. It would have been satisfactory to me if there were not some doubts upon that subject; but under all the circumstances, considering what we know from public reports, and comparing them with declarations made in that House and other places, there does appear to me to be

be some doubt and mystery upon this transaction, which leave on my mind sentiments of considerable uneasiness and apprehension. It would be great relief and satisfaction to me to have this serious apprehension removed by an explicit declaration from the Minister; but if not, the House is placed in a new and awful situation, in which it will be incumbent on us to think what steps it will be proper for us to take.

No reply was made to Mr. Grey's observations.

VOLUNTEER REGULATIONS BILL.

Mr. Secretary Yorke moved the order of the day upon the volunteer bill.

On the clause for allowing adjutants and quarter-masters half-pay,

Mr. Whitbread observed, that there were many persons who had never been in the regulars, but who, from the excellence of their conduct as adjutants in volunteer corps, were, he thought, equally entitled to half-pay. He was of opinion, that it should depend upon the report of the inspecting field officer as to the good discipline of the corps, whether the adjutant of such corps should be entitled to such pay or not. In the course of his speech, Mr. Whitbread adverted to an expression used by Gen. Maitland on a former occasion, that there were not six good adjutants to be found in the whole army.

Mr. Secretary Yorke said, it was necessary to lay down a general principle with respect to the half-pay to be allowed to adjutants, as otherwise, persons who acted as adjutants in volunteer corps, and who were wholly incompetent, might become entitled to it, and thus saddle considerable expence upon the public. To this rule, however, there might be some exceptions, as, if the inspecting field officer reported the good qualifications of an adjutant, it certainly was intended to represent such case to his Majesty, with a view that such adjutant might become entitled to the allowance in question.

General Maitland said, the expression he used on a former occasion, was not that there were not six good adjutants to be found in the army, but that there were not six new adjutants to be found.

Mr. Pitt said, he agreed in the general outline with respect to adjutants receiving pay. He thought, however, that where there was a difficulty in getting good adjutants, serjeant-majors from regular troops might be resorted to as adjutants for volunteer corps. He then adverted to, and re-

stated his former proposition with respect to transferring officers from the line as field officers in volunteer corps.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, it was the strong disposition of Ministers to agree to any thing that could tend to improve the discipline of the volunteer corps, consistent with the nature and principles of their constitution. It was his opinion that the purpose of the right hon. Gentleman would be better answered by the appointment of inspecting field officers, who were appointed from officers of the line. He objected to the proposition of the right hon. Gentleman for the appointment of field officers to volunteer corps from the line, because the volunteers should not be led to suppose that it was intended to graft upon the system any thing not congenial to its nature. He knew that a degree of jealousy had been caused in some volunteer corps by the appointment of inspecting field officers, because they were liable to a sort of compulsory inspection by persons receiving pay. He was convinced, however, of the necessity of appointing inspecting field officers, and that the volunteers could not be an efficient force without them; but if field officers from the line were introduced into the volunteer corps, it would necessarily create jealousy. It had been made part of the proposition, that field officers from the line should not be appointed to volunteer corps without the consent of the commanding officers; but this was placing a commanding officer in a situation of great difficulty and delicacy. If he recommended the appointment of a field officer from the line, it might be considered as a confession of his own insufficiency; whilst, if he refused to assent to a recommendation of that nature, he might be liable to censure: add to this, there were many volunteer corps which already had the benefit of the assistance of military officers of great experience, either as commandants, or as holding commissions in such corps. At the same time, it was his wish that it should be a part of the instructions from the commander in chief to the general officers commanding districts, to spare field officers from the regulars, wherever it can be done, in order to perfect the discipline of the volunteer corps. He repeated, that the object of the right hon. Gentleman was answered by the appointment of inspecting field officers, and also by the appointment from the line of adjutants and serjeant-majors.

Mr. Pitt said, as to the appointment of inspecting field officers, it was obvious that could not interfere with his proposal of appointing field officers from the line to assist in disciplining

disciplining volunteer corps, as the persons appointed inspecting officers held the rank of lieutenant colonels; whilst he proposed to appoint persons, probably captains, from half-pay. At least they might try whether any such persons could be obtained; at any rate, the two descriptions of persons were wholly distinct, as no one was appointed an inspecting officer who had not been a field officer in the army, whilst he proposed to take field officers for volunteers from those in the line who held subaltern commissions. The right hon. Gentleman had said, that such a measure would be likely to create jealousy: he was sorry to hear it, but certainly the appointment of inspecting field officers was not sufficient to render volunteer corps in any degree well disciplined. Some of these officers had half a county to attend to, and he would ask, whether they could in that case do much more than relate what they had been told by others, with respect to the discipline of corps, instead of being intimately acquainted with it themselves. He was now, however, told, that because persons had been appointed to see that instructions had been given to volunteer corps, it was unnecessary to appoint persons to instruct them: he could not conceive this to be very conclusive reasoning. He did not believe any jealousy would be excited by the appointment of field officers of the description he had alluded to; it would rather be caused by the appointing inspecting field officers, who were superior to the commanders of the regiments. Add to this, that inspecting field officers were appointed by a compulsory regulation, whilst all he proposed was to provide field officers where it was requested by the commanding officers of corps, therefore there was still less cause for jealousy. Another ground of objection was, that commanding officers would be placed in a situation of great delicacy; but he did not see the force of this objection. Suppose the commanding officer were to recommend the appointment of a field officer from the line to his corps, he would only indicate that he was a man of common sense, and that he was more anxious to do his duty than to be actuated by trifling vanity; on the other side, if he declined such accommodation, he might be liable to censure for not doing that which he ought to do. As to any objection of economy, the saving which might arise from not pursuing the regulation he proposed, ought not to be put in competition with the advantages which would arise from its adoption. For these reasons he was still inclined

to persist in urging the proposition, which he had before made.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that if the description of persons alluded to by the right hon. Gentleman were appointed, they might assume an importance which would be inconsistent with the general system of the corps. He instanced the volunteers of Ireland, who had had no such officers, and who had displayed the best discipline, as well as the greatest courage and zeal.

General Tarleton bore testimony to the excellence of the discipline of the volunteer corps of Ireland.

General Loftus objected to officers being sent from camps or other military stations in the hour of danger to discipline volunteer corps.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, his idea was, that such assistance should be at the discretion of the general of the district.

Mr. Pitt said, that in the maritime districts such assistance might be provided, but with respect to the corps in the interior, they should be assisted in discipline by officers from half-pay.

Mr. W. Dickinson observed, that there must be good officers to make good soldiers. As to economy, it was not a question of economizing money, but the blood and lives of the people: it was necessary to have good officers to ensure discipline, and it was necessary to have discipline in order to ensure success; and he would ask whether defeats were considered as cheap articles by the present Administration? If an enemy were to land, the country might have reason to curse such parsimony. If the bill now before the House was made any thing of, it would be made so by the minority, and not by the majority; for if it had passed as originally brought in, it would have been one of the strong instances of the weak conduct of a feeble Administration.

Mr. Hiley Addington said, he would leave to the decision of the House and the public the hon. Gentleman's charge of economy against the present Administration. He objected to any measure for the introduction of field officers from the line into volunteer corps, as it would tend to create dissensions among the officers and privates of these corps.

Mr. Windham wished to understand precisely the meaning of his right hon. Friend's (Mr. Pitt's) proposition, as he could not consent to rob the line of officers, in order to discipline volunteer corps.

Mr.

Mr. Pitt said, his proposition was to take officers from the half-pay, where they were useless, and to make them useful by contributing to discipline volunteer corps.

Mr. W. Wynne deprecated the economy of Ministers, as its only object was to diminish those expences which were to come before Parliament, whilst a greater weight fell upon the people.

Mr. Spencer Stanhope adverted to the erection of beacons, and instanced one in the West Riding of Yorkshire, guarded by four persons, one of whom had only one leg, another had only one arm, the third had lost the roof of his mouth, and the fourth was notoriously drunken, and each of these was paid half-a-guinea per day.

Mr. Secretary Yorke said, that beacons had been erected in the West Riding of Yorkshire without consulting the General of the district, Lord Mulgrave.

Mr. Spencer Stanhope said, they were erected by order of the General of the district.

Mr. Secretary Yorke replied, that he had understood the contrary.

After some further observations from Lord Temple, Sir W. Milner, Sir Henry Mildmay, and other Members, the clause was agreed to.

On the clause relating to the recovery of fines and penalties,

Mr. Pitt suggested that it would be better to give an option in case of non-payment, either to levy the fine by distress, or to inflict imprisonment for two or three days or a week, as the distress might be injurious to the family of the person distressed upon.

Mr. G. Vansittart was for extending the imprisonment to a fortnight.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* thought the imprisonment of the individual would be more injurious to his family than levying the fine by distress.

Mr. Pitt explained, that the idea was, to vest a discretionary power in the magistrate, to imprison, suppose for a week, in the default of distress.

Sir R. Buxton strongly recommended the allowing a certain number of days, at the expiration of which, if the penalties were not paid, the magistrate should have the power of committing in the case of default.

Mr. Sturges Bourne contended, that the optional power proposed to be given to the magistrate, proceeded on the most

most humane and liberal principle that it was possible to introduce into a case of pecuniary penalty.

Mr. Burland proposed the introduction of a clause, in substance enacting, that in case of a refusal or neglect to pay the fine after a given number of days (five was proposed in the first instance), it should then be lawful for the magistrate to commit, &c.

Mr. Hobhouse spoke in support of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's idea in favour of the mode of distress, as imprisonment would evidently prevent the individual from earning the accustomed provision for his family.

Mr. Whitbread made a variety of observations on the part of the bill under discussion: he was inclined to make the opulent private pay in his purse; but would not resort to imprisonment except where it was indispensably necessary. The proceeding of distress he thought one of extreme oppression; but as some principle of compulsion must obtain, he thought the option of distress or imprisonment should be given. With respect to the application of these penalties, they were to go to the common funds of the different corps for defraying the necessary expences, &c. But in observing upon this point, he must repeat what he had said thereon on a former occasion; he thought it would be a sounder and more manly policy to come forward at once and provide for the payment of such expences out of the public purse; as he predicted, for want of certain and unfailing funds, the greater number of the corps would fall to pieces and cease to exist. This he said, to a certain degree, was exemplified by the instance of one of the City corps, where, out of the requisite sum of about 11,000*l.* he understood 7 or 8000*l.* or some very large sum, remained due. Several corps were destitute of the most necessary articles. It was now of little consequence whether the plan of subscriptions was originally a wise measure; he thought them, now at least, very improper. They were providing for a permanent system in the bill. As that was the case, let them do it with their eyes open, let them not blink the genuine question; they should contemplate the danger as it ought to be viewed. There were many articles of expence absolutely necessary to be incurred in respect of the volunteer corps: keeping the arms clean and in repair was one of the principal items; the payment of the drummers was another indispensable requisite: he wished to know whether that was to be provided for out of any particular fund?

There

There had been more money thrown away in respect of the volunteers since their institution than would set on foot an immense regular force: let the private subscriptions and annual contributions be calculated, and see what an immense aggregate they would amount to! The present system was one of the most profuse and extravagant that was ever yet broached.

One or two Members rose, and expressed their opinion that what Mr. Whitbread was advancing was not in order.

Mr. Whitbread resumed. What he had said was strictly in order, and advanced then with a view to save the time of the House; the penalties were applicable to the funds, his observations were therefore in order. As to the question, he reprobated the utter want of economy in the system. A large regular force might have over and over again been put in activity for less money. In process of time the present sources would fail; individuals would every year become more weary or less able to pay the contributions. Speaking more immediately to the point in question, were the alternative of imprisonment resolved on, he should prefer the shortest possible period.

Mr. Vaughan thought it incumbent on him to explain,—that of the corps which he conceived the hon. Gentleman to allude to, he was himself a Member; that so far from the corps being in debt, it possessed considerable funds; and that so far from being discontented, they were the first to offer permanent service.

Mr. Secretary Yorke proposed the introduction of some words as an amendment of the clause in question.

Mr. H. Lascelles thought that the accumulation of fines should be prevented, as they might run up to an amount that might impede the resignation of a member when he should so determine.

Mr. Pitt referred the hon. Member to a particular part of the clause, where the case was provided for by the words.

Mr. Rose expressed his opinion, that the magistrate should be vested with the power of committing to the nearest place of confinement.

The clause, as amended, was then agreed to.

Some discussion then took place, respecting a subsequent provision in the bill, similar to the preceding one in some of its effects, but principally affecting a superior class of individuals. The Gentlemen who delivered their opinions were principally Messrs. Whitbread, Curwen, Secretary

Yorke,

Yorke, Bragge, Thompson, and Wm. Dundas. It was contended on the part of those who supported the bill, that those persons who were able to pay, but who from obstinacy, or other motives, did not choose to pay, should be decidedly compellable; and with respect to those, the option of distress or imprisonment was proposed to be left.

Mr. Fox objected to the principle, as regulated by the provisions of the bill. Though the members had agreed to the payment of certain fines, they had no idea of eventually incurring so severe a punishment; by such a regulation, the volunteer was put in a different situation from that in which he considered himself, when making his agreement.

Mr. W. Dundas observed that if the volunteer agreed *bona fide* to pay certain fines, he was bound to make them good, or he had agreed to nothing.

Mr. Pitt observed, that a degree of compulsion in the case under discussion was evidently necessary. They should recollect that the right of the volunteer to resign was admitted, in case he was not satisfied with the regulations.—The discipline of the corps was surely necessary to be preserved; and farther the fines arose out of regulations agreed to by the individuals themselves. The principle was not new to this act. In the original act a provision to that effect obtained, but it was not modified by the optional power. The points at issue resolved into two questions: the first, whether in default of distress, proceedings should be had against the person; the latter was certainly one in analogy to the law of the country: and the second, which involved the only new point, was, whether an alternative of subjecting the individual to imprisonment should be allowed; and that this was the more lenient of the two he thought had been clearly established.—After considering the topic a little further, he expressed his concurrence in the regulation for allowing the optional power.

Some further clauses and provisions of the bill were then agreed to without observation, when it was agreed to report progress, and ask leave to sit again.

The House then resumed, and the Committee were ordered to sit again the next day.

Mr. Alexander obtained leave to bring in a bill to indemnify all persons concerned in issuing or carrying into effect the orders of council respecting the importation of certain goods in neutral ships from America.

The other orders of the day were then disposed of, and at half past eleven o'clock the House adjourned.

HOUSE

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

SATURDAY, MARCH 10.

The Dublin police bill was read a first, and ordered to be read a second time.

A new writ was ordered for Preston, in the room of John Horrocks, Esq. deceased.

Mr. Corry moved the order of the day for going into a Committee on the Irish duties bill.

The order having been read,

Mr. Corry observed, that before he made any further motion upon this subject he wished to say a few words. In the course of the debate of the preceding day, some doubt had been thrown out, that the bill before the House was one that affected the interests of the Crown, and that therefore the Royal assent ought to have been signified. He was ready at that time, and he was ready now, if it were proper, to shew that the bill was conformable to the precedents of the Parliament of Ireland. He also understood, though on this point he could not speak so positively, that it was not without precedent in the Parliament of Great Britain before the union; and in the Imperial Parliament, since the union, there were precedents, viz. the three different acts which had passed relative to these duties; it was true they were only annual bills, and therefore he did not rely entirely upon them. But though there were precedents of that nature, if it could enter into the imagination of any man that this measure trenching upon any constitutional principle, he certainly would be the last man to take advantage of them. As there had not been sufficient time however, since the doubts had been thrown out, to ascertain how the principle stood affected by this proceeding, he should, in order that full time might be given for consideration, move to postpone the Committee till Monday.

Mr. Foster said, that the great doubts and difficulties which had arisen in his mind upon the subject were founded upon the circumstance of this bill being perpetual, therefore he did not conceive that annual bills could be considered as any precedent.

The motion was then agreed to.

The Committee on the Irish countervailing duty bill was put off till Monday.

The Irish malt bill was read a second time, and committed for Monday.

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E

Mr.

Mr. Secretary Yorke moved the order of the day, for going into a Committee on the

VOLUNTEER REGULATIONS BILL.

The House having resolved itself into a Committee,

Mr. Yorke proceeded to propose some new clauses. The first was, to invalidate any agreements that might have been entered into between masters and servants, by which the latter were prevented from entering into volunteer corps. The next was a clause to repeal a clause in a former bill, compelling the parish to pay the drill serjeants: they are in future to be paid out of the public purse. These clauses were agreed to. The next was a clause authorizing the commander of a corps, in case of any member misbehaving himself, to deprive him of that day's pay, or else to disallow that day as one of his days of exercise.

Mr. Pitt said, the clause now proposed would have some effect, but still he did not think it would be sufficient. He had prepared some clauses upon this subject, which would go a little further. One of them was to give the commander of a corps a power to order any member misbehaving himself while under arms, into custody during the time the corps remained under arms; to inflict fines as high as five shillings, in cases of non-attendance, not taking care of their arms, &c. He did not think that this would give any offence to the volunteer corps, because it certainly was not an unnecessary severity. He meant this to be a general clause applicable to all corps. If any persons should feel themselves dissatisfied with these regulations, which he did not think probable, still they had the power to resign. But he entertained no apprehensions upon the subject, and he should certainly take an opportunity of proposing them in some stage of the bill.

Mr. Tierney very much approved of the regulations suggested by the right hon. Gentleman, but he was apprehensive that some corps in town would feel a degree of jealousy upon the subject. They were in many respects different from most of the corps in the country; they received no pay, and many of the members who kept shops, who perhaps had only one apprentice, or perhaps none, would feel themselves much hurt at being fined so heavily, when they really could not leave their business without the greatest inconvenience. But as to the power of ordering a member under an arrest for misconduct while under arms, he thought there could be no objection to it.

Mr.

Mr. Pitt said, that these regulations might be applied only to the corps who received pay.

Colonel Eyre thought there was no occasion for any further regulations, and therefore should object to these clauses.

The *Marquis of Titchfield* approved entirely of the ideas of *Mr. Pitt* upon this subject, and thought they were highly advantageous to the volunteer system. If he might presume to offer any thing in addition to that which came from so high an authority, it would be, that the point of discipline to which the clause referred, should be judged of by a military council in the way of a court martial, subject to the approbation of the commander of each corps.

Mr. Secretary Yorke thought both the clause which he had proposed, and those proposed by the right hon. Gentleman, might be adopted, for they were not in the least inconsistent with each other. He approved of the system of imprisoning volunteers among themselves for the day, when they were under arms, if they had misconducted themselves in the ranks; and he thought the ideas submitted to the Committee by the right hon. Gentleman very good. He dissented from the mode in which *Mr. Pitt's* clause proposed to levy the fines, but thought they should be submitted to a court martial, as had been hinted by a noble Marquis: he thought also, that all these proceedings for fines and penalties should be subject to the approbation of the commander of each corps, &c.

Mr. Lascelles thought that, generally speaking, it was impolitic to impose on volunteer corps any other fines than those which originated with themselves.

Mr. Pitt said, that he had not so distinctly, perhaps, as he might have done, stated what he meant by misconduct of a volunteer under arms: he did not mean general misconduct, for which the commander had already power to punish him in some degree, by expressing displeasure, &c. He did not mean to give a general latitude to the commander to punish in the specific manner he proposed for general misconduct, but he meant to apply the punishment he proposed. If any volunteer under arms should particularly misbehave, should neglect his arms and accoutrements, or clothing, in any remarkable manner, or should behave himself indecently, or act contrary to most of the rules and regulations of the corps, then some punishment should follow, and that punishment should be specific, in order that there should be no doubt what the result must be of such misconduct. Perhaps the better way would be to take the clause

of the right hon. Gentleman first, and then his (Mr. Pitt's) clauses might be brought up and read, so that the Committee might the better understand the meaning of them; which course was adopted. He proposed that persons misbehaving in the way he stated, should be imprisoned in their own corps for the day they were out, &c. That in some instances the fine should be as high as five shillings; in others, not higher than one shilling, to be regulated by the fact whether the party incurring the forfeit contributed to the poor's rate or not. Mr. Pitt professed himself very happy to hear the sentiments of the noble Lord on the other side of the House (the Marquis of Titchfield) on all occasions, and particularly on the present occasion. He did not entertain any doubt of the propriety of the court martial suggested by that noble Lord, provided the sentence of the court martial was made subject to the approbation of the commander, but he owned he thought the summary power of the other punishment might be more effectual than the fines themselves.

After some further conversation the clause of the Secretary of State was received and agreed to, as were all his other clauses.

Mr. Pitt then proposed his clauses; which he said, he submitted to the Committee without saying any thing in their behalf at present.

The first clause respecting the fines being read,

The *Attorney General* thought, as a permanent system, the clause a very wise one, but doubted whether it was advisable to adopt it at the present moment. He was afraid it might be, under all the circumstances, endeavouring to do too much; it was better, perhaps, to do a little less, although the system was defective, than by endeavouring to make it perfect, possibly in some measure to overturn it. He was afraid of proceeding too far upon the compulsory system with volunteers: that might be reserved in case his Majesty should call forth his subjects under the compulsory enrollment.

Mr. Pitt suggested that the objections which seemed to be entertained against too much of the compulsory system being applied to volunteers might probably be done away, by making a distinction between those receiving pay and those who did not. He thought the system he proposed would, upon a moderate computation, improve the military discipline of 150,000 men in a very short time; an object well worth attending to at this important crisis: and this he meant

meant as applicable to those who might not come forward, under an invitation, to put themselves on permanent duty, which, after all, was the very best way to make them good foldiers. This was a matter not to be neglected, for we might look for the event in which we should have to resist the enemy in the course of a few weeks at farthest: now he could have no hesitation in saying that might be done effectually by the volunteers, discreetly mixt with the forces of the line; and to do so effectually, care should be taken of the improvement of the volunteers in their discipline. He felt this so forcibly, that he must press it upon the House.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* agreed with the Attorney General upon this subject, that it was dangerous to try to accomplish too much in the system of military exercise of the volunteers; and he thought the volunteers had already made great progress in that matter. It was supposed that twenty-five days would be sufficient to instruct them tolerably; now there were hardly any of them who had not been instructed for forty, and some of them for more than sixty days. He was persuaded that Parliament had done wisely in giving the volunteers an opportunity of acting as they have, and he could not help thinking that the degree of discipline they had acquired already, would afford us all a degree of confidence, not only in their further improvement, but also warrant our reliance on their sufficiency to meet any veterans of the enemy. He conceived, that at this moment the volunteers had attained such a degree of discipline as no one at the time of their first establishment had, any idea of, nor even at the time when the first volunteer bill was introduced; and he owned that he contemplated with astonishment, as well as satisfaction, the degree of perfection at which the volunteer system was now arrived; and this justified the hope that a very large portion of the volunteers of England, mixed with the regular troops, were fit to meet the veteran troops of France, and that our meeting of them so would give us nothing short of hope and full confidence of immediate success. But he did entertain strong doubts of the propriety of this clause, on the ground which had been stated by his learned Friend, the Attorney General. He observed, that in the last war, the volunteers were only 150,000, and yet they answered the purpose for which they were intended; no one complained of their inefficiency in the course of the last war. They achieved a great object in the course of their services in Ireland, although they were neither half so numerous, nor under any such

such regulations as they are at present. His main object was, that the regulations of the volunteers should be left as much as possible to the volunteers themselves; that Parliament should interfere as little as possible with the internal regulations and management of volunteer corps, and particularly in the system of inflicting penalties. He had no doubt of the efficacy of the system recommended by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Pitt) as a permanent system; but the doubt was, whether there was not some risk in adopting it at the present moment.

Mr. Pitt said, he certainly was willing to hope with the right hon. Gentleman, and to believe, and even to be confident, that there was indeed a very considerable portion of the volunteers of Great Britain, who, in concert with the regular force, would be of great utility in the contest which we are now to expect; but he could not disguise from the House, because he could not disguise from himself, that very many of the volunteers were in no degree advanced to that state of discipline in which we should wish to see them, and which it was indispensably necessary they should be in before they could be essentially serviceable to their country, when called out for its defence, and in support of its existence. There was an error in the judgment of many Gentlemen who had spoken upon the subject of the military discipline of the volunteers: too many judged of the volunteers of England from the brilliant corps of the metropolis; whereas it was notorious that many corps in the country were in nothing like the same state; many of them had but just received their arms, which, under the many difficulties with which we had to encounter, was not to be wondered at. But from what he himself knew, and from the credible information he received from others, from the various fluctuations and uncertainty that were incident to the system, there were many of them in a state which was far from approaching the situation described by the right hon. Gentleman. He did not say that many of the volunteers, who may in the course perhaps of three weeks be put to the proof, and may have to meet with the veteran troops of France, would not acquit themselves with honour in union with troops of the line; nor that ultimately they would not be successful in the contest for the defence of the country: that was not the question now to be discussed; the question now was this, What was the most speedy mode of making the volunteers efficient for the purposes of action with as little loss of blood as possible? for that was to us the most interesting part of the subject, and with the care of which that House was

was entrusted. As to what had been said of the volunteers of Ireland in the last war, it did not apply to the present case. They had long been called out, and had been on permanent duty for months, and some of them for years, and acquired the qualities of veteran troops, which was not hitherto the case with the present volunteers. He was not to be told what the volunteers were the last war; for no man would say, however serious the apprehension of invasion was during the last war, that the danger was then any thing like the danger with which we were threatened now. There never was a period in which the preparations for invading this country were similar in magnitude to the present preparations—so much so that Parliament had already expressed its sense to that effect by the measures it had brought forward. It had indeed once thought of making many regulations respecting the discipline of the volunteers; but had afterwards confided that subject to the discretion of Ministers, in the hope that much would have been done; but Ministers disappointed that hope, and therefore Parliament ought now to act for itself. As to the idea of not attempting to do too much, it was observable that, if these regulations were likely to have a bad effect on the volunteer system, the hopes which he entertained that many of them would consent to be put upon permanent duty, by which they would certainly be subject to much more rigour, were very ill-founded: he did, however, entertain sanguine hopes that they would, in great numbers, accept of the invitation to be put on permanent duty, as the very best means to make them a good military force; and to exercise ourselves before the French come was the best mode of enabling us to meet them when they do, not only with a certainty of triumph, but also with a reasonable expectation of conducting the contest with as little effusion as possible of British blood. He should be glad if every volunteer in England could put himself for a while on permanent military duty; but that, in the nature of things, was impossible; there were many who could not possibly so engage. He admitted that much had been done already, but that was no reason why we should not do as much more as possible. This was a matter to be considered most seriously. Comparisons between this and the last war were absolutely idle. The whole of the preparations of France for invasion last war were hardly equal to an advanced guard of one of its numerous posts at present. He did not disparage the merit of the volunteers, nor was he insensible of what they had already

ready

ready done; he only enforced the necessity of doing every thing that was in our power to meet, upon the best possible advantage, the enemy, and that in a few weeks, to decide a contest on which not the interest or welfare, but the existence of this country was at stake. Neither did he wish to disparage the valour of his countrymen—he knew what men contending for their freedom and existence, unarmed and undisciplined, could do; nor had he any idea that the efforts of a whole people, such as Britons, would not be ultimately successful, although they might be undisciplined. He knew that every freeman ought to be a hero in such a contest, and he was confident that few indeed among us would disappoint the expectations of the country in that extremity, should we come to it. The crisis was at a certainty approaching, it would be our own fault if we were not prepared for it—it would be the fault of that House if it should not do every thing in its power to prepare for it. No man in the kingdom ought to have any reason hereafter to reproach himself with negligence upon such a subject. He would not tire the Committee with further observations. Some which he had delivered, he admitted to be a repetition of what he had urged before; but possibly they might alter the judgment of others, who were not convinced by them before. He certainly had no hope that the arguments of others could alter the opinion he had now delivered upon this most momentous subject, for which reason he found himself compelled to press this clause for the adoption of the Committee.

The *Secretary at War* contended for the propriety of conforming to certain regulations; nay, of scrupulously adhering to them: it was, to a certain degree, obviously a question of good faith with the volunteers themselves; and the Committee should recollect that the sanction of Parliament had been given on the occasion.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* desired to make one or two observations which he had omitted to state when discussing the proposition of the right hon. Gentleman. He must deny that experience shewed the necessity of the measure recommended. He had heard of no complaints made by any corps, as to an insufficiency of internal discipline. He adverted to the provision for withholding a certain part of the pay of the volunteers while upon military duty, which he considered as likely to tend, in a considerable degree, to the maintenance of good order and discipline. This, in effect, went to sub-
ject

ject the volunteer to a mulct who should misconduct himself while under arms.

The Committee then called loudly for the question; upon which a division took place, when there appeared Ayes - 26
Noes - 27

Majority for Ministers :- 1

The discussion upon the remaining clauses and provisions of the bill continued a considerable time longer; but as strangers were excluded the remainder of the evening, we are prevented from detailing what took place. We understand, however, that the remaining clauses and schedules, &c. of the bill were gone through by the Committee, the report received by the House *pro forma*, and the bill ordered to be again recommitted for Monday. Adjourned at half past seven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

MONDAY, MARCH 12.

Counsel were heard relative to the Scotch Appeal, William Duke of Queensberry *v.* John M'Murdo, Esq. The further hearing of the case was deferred till Wednesday.

The bills before the House, chiefly private, were then forwarded in their several stages, and some private business disposed of; after which their Lordships adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, MARCH 12.

The Scotch bank bill was brought in and read a first time.

The Temple Bar, &c. improvement bill was read a second time, and ordered to be committed.

Alderman Boydell's lottery bill was read a third time and passed.

Mr. Hurst presented a petition from John Wilson, who was committed to Newgate for prevarication before the Aylesbury Committee, acknowledging his offence, imploring the clemency of the House, and requesting to be permitted to ask pardon at the bar of the House.

Sir George Cornewall said, he did not wish that the imprisonment of this man should last longer than was necessary for the purpose of example.

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Mr.

Mr. Hurst then moved that he should be brought up on Wednesday to be discharged. Ordered.

A petition was presented from the trustees of the British Museum, praying for parliamentary relief. Ordered to lie on the table; and an account was ordered to be laid before the House of the different sums already granted by Parliament for the service of the British Museum.

The House having resolved itself into a Committee of Ways and Means;

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* rose to move, that the sum of two millions be raised by way of loan on Exchequer bills; he thought it proper to add, that this sum was not necessary to answer any immediate demand, but he hoped the Committee would consent to grant it at present, in order to allow him a greater latitude when he came to contract for the loan, and for arranging the taxes for the service of the present year.

The resolution was agreed to, and ordered to be reported the next day.

IRISH DUTIES.

Mr. Corry moved the order of the day for going into a Committee on the Irish duty acts. The order having been read,

Mr. Corry said, that the last day that this order was under the consideration of the House, an objection had been taken to the proceeding, upon the ground that the hereditary revenue of the Crown was affected by this bill; and that therefore the royal consent ought to have been previously signified to authorize the House to proceed in it. That the hereditary revenue of the Crown was affected by this bill, in a certain degree, was undoubtedly true, and it had been admitted on the former discussion; but this no further or otherwise than was justified by precedents in the Parliament of Ireland for a series of years, including the time when the right hon. Gentleman opposite to him filled the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer. The hereditary revenue in Ireland took its origin much about the same time that it did in this country, and was more extensive, not in amount, but in the objects it embraced, than the hereditary revenue, properly so called, in England. Upon the abolition of the Court of Wards and Liveries, there was granted in lieu thereof, what was called hearth money and smoke money; for the defence of the realm, the duties of Excise were granted; and for guarding the seas the duties of Customs; and all these duties were hereditary

ditary to the Crown : in Ireland these were granted by the 14 and 15 Charles 2. The bill upon the table went to regulate only two articles, in which the hereditary revenue was affected, viz. tobacco and tea. By the original acts of Charles 2. the duty on tobacco was $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. a pound; in the reign of William 3. additional duties were granted; but some doubts having arisen with respect to the original duties, a declaratory clause was inserted in an act of William 3. which stated, that the duty of $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. should be the hereditary revenue; and it was so stated in the bill that consolidated the import duties in Ireland in 1791. In the 33d of the King the civil list was settled upon his Majesty in Ireland, in perfect conformity to the mode pursued in this country; and in the money bill of that and all preceding years, the enactment with regard to tobacco was continued, though it might be a question how far it was now necessary.—By the arrangements with regard to the hereditary revenue, Parliament obtained the power of regulating the additional duties, which were always granted sessionally; the sessions being till the year 1782 biennial, and since that time annual. The enactment with regard to tobacco had been contained in every sessional tax-act, after as well as before the settlement of the civil list, without the consent from the Crown being ever signified: this measure was therefore to be considered as completely justified. With regard to the article of tea, the circumstances were somewhat different. Though not named in the acts 14 and 15 Charles 2. tea was subject to the general *ad valorem* duties, and formed part of the hereditary revenue. In the reign of George the 2d, a new book of rates was formed, in which tea was specified. Thus it remained till the seventh of his present Majesty, when the duty was changed from an *ad valorem* duty, to a rated duty of 6d. a pound on green, and 4d. on black tea: and out of the whole amount, an appropriation was made of 10,000l. a year for the support of the linen manufacture, and 7,300l. to be taken and deemed as the hereditary revenue; the remainder was to go into the general revenue of the country. From that time to the present, as well after as before the settlement of the civil list, this appropriation had been uniformly enacted every year, without any consent being previously signified by the Crown, though it was evident that interest was affected; for though, if the duties should fall, the Crown would gain by having a fixed revenue of 7,300l. yet if the duties should increase considerably, the Crown must

lose by having the hereditary revenue limited to that sum. This mode of appropriation had in like manner been enacted three times in the united Parliament. With regard to precedents in the British Parliament, there was a case extremely analogous: on the consolidation of the customs and excise duties in 1787, it having been ascertained, upon an account taken of the revenues of the post office, that they produced a quarterly sum of 38,000*l.* above what was payable to the Crown as hereditary revenue, that sum was ordered to be paid into the consolidated fund, and the remainder was after such appropriation left to the Crown. This certainly was, though a stronger case, the converse of what he had stated respecting tea, but the principle was analogous. But on the consolidation of the post office duties in the year 1797, a certain sum was ordered to be paid to the Crown, and the eventual profit was to go to the public. This was exactly a case in point, and yet on neither of these occasions was the previous consent of the Crown signified. He hoped that what he had stated would be a complete justification of the Crown-lawyers in Ireland, for having drawn up this bill in conformity to uniform precedent. But, if upon a subject of such importance any doubts now remain, he had not the least wish to press the proceeding upon this measure, without being previously assured of the consent of the Crown.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* was of opinion, and he could not help thinking that the House must be of opinion, that his right hon. Friend was sufficiently justified by the precedents he had adduced in his behalf; he had at any rate given the House an opportunity to investigate the proper mode of proceeding. For his own part he was perfectly satisfied, that should the Crown withhold its consent from such a measure, no precedents whatever could justify the House in their further proceeding where the interests of the Crown were in any degree affected. But this consent might be given or withheld at any stage of the bill. It could not be learned from the title of the bill that the interests of the Crown were concerned. It was from the statement of the right hon. Gentleman alone that he had learned that the Crown was concerned in the present bill; and having learned this, he had applied to his Majesty, and had authority to say that his Majesty gave his consent in the most ample manner.

Mr. Foster stated that the duties on tea and tobacco were far from being prominent objects in his mind when he had started the objection. It was the interests of the Crown in general

general which he had not asked any other person as was related to the late Mr. Pitt's conduct, and as they affected his successor.

Mr. Lloyd said, that the House might perhaps be in want of what was the proper mode of proceeding on such an occasion, and it was necessary that some of the right hon. Gentlemen for this country should be present, as he had led to an application in that House, the result of which was so agreeable to the House. The subject now was not in regard to the amount of what the Crown might be entitled to, but in regard to the principle, and it was not clear whether it was good or sound, nor was it a matter of constitutionality. It was unconstitutional, the hon. Genl. then thought, that any alteration should take place in the fixed revenues without a message from the Crown. Whatever may have been the practice of the Irish Parliament, such a proceeding was certainly contrary to the practice of the British Parliament. The House may perhaps be satisfied with this method of getting information as to the affairs of the Crown, but he wished it to be understood that in the crisis it was by no means the right way, and that nothing less than a message was constitutional.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* was willing to appeal to the House, if a message was at all necessary on such an occasion. Many instances such as this had occurred on grants, and on committees of supply, where the Crown was interested, and where the consent was not deemed previously necessary. But so far as the interest of the Crown was concerned, he repeated that such consent was fully given.

Mr. G. Pausan was surprised that on this bill no communication from the Crown should be thought necessary. When the Civil List Act passed in Ireland in the year 1793, a message had been received from the Lord Lieutenant, and the message was ordered to be ingrossed in the books previous to any proceedings of Parliament.

Mr. Ormsby begged to remind the House, that after the Civil List Act, in the 34th of the King, an act passed of nearly the same nature, without any message whatever from the Crown.

Mr. Vanfittart stated that his principal motive in rising was only to say, in regard to the hereditary interests of the Crown, that the British acts alluded to, had passed without any notice from the Crown.

Mr. Foster was of opinion that, even if his present Majesty should be satisfied, it was necessary also that he should intimate

state his approbation and consent as far as respected his successor, or the interests of the Crown at large.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* begged leave explicitly to state that his Majesty had given the fullest consent, not only in regard to himself, but as it respected also the general interests of the Crown: but at the same time he wished to state that his Majesty did not mean that the House should be fettered in the smallest degree in their discussions.

The House then resolved itself into a Committee on the bill. On the first clause being read,

Mr. Foster rose to object to it, as it granted the duties without any limitation of time, and consequently granted them for ever: to this clause he should therefore most strenuously object. It had been the constant and uniform practice of the Parliament of Ireland to vote the duties annually, and he saw no reason why that practice was now, in the midst of a war, to be departed from. It would not raise the revenue, it was not called for by the merchants of Ireland; on the contrary, it only tended to harass them. It was the more unnecessary to make these duties perpetual, because, from the unfortunate state of the Irish finances, the Irish debt would soon bear that proportion to the debt of Great Britain, that the finances of the two countries must, under the provisions of the act of union, be consolidated; consequently in two, three, or four years, all these duties, which were now granted for ever, must be revised, altered, and many of them repealed. What then was the use of this measure? It could only tend to harass the merchants. It was said that it would increase the security of the public creditor; but did the public creditor demand any such security; was he not perfectly satisfied with the duties being granted annually? nay, when the Parliament of Ireland once voted the duties for only three months, did the public creditor complain that his security was injured? The interests of the Crown were also affected, because some of the duties which formed the hereditary revenue were repealed, the hearth duty, for instance, in a great degree: so that it would be impossible to grant the Crown an equivalent for the hereditary revenue, because it would be impossible to know to what the hereditary revenue would amount. It had been said by the right hon. Gentleman, that the merchants of Ireland were satisfied with this schedule of duties, except in a very few instances. Upon this subject he could only say, that he had seen a representation from several merchants in
Dublin,

Dublin, in which they objected to above 40 articles: he would not now go through them all, but the right hon. Gentleman knew that with regard to the drawback upon the exportation of foreign herrings, they had presented strong remonstrances: they had also made strong objections to the duties on drugs, and on the importation of foreign hops; and, above all, upon the export duty on the linen trade. It never would have been believed, that a perpetual duty of four per cent. would have been laid upon the export of Irish linens. It was a circumstance worthy of remark, that the first perpetual duty that was ever laid on in Ireland, was a duty upon the export of her staple manufacture. The right hon. Gentleman was the first person that ever proposed even a temporary duty upon the export of that article. With regard to the schedule of the duties, it had only been delivered last Tuesday, and it had been impossible to consult with any person from Ireland upon the subject, or to consider it with that deliberation which so important a subject deserved. Upon the whole he could not see any reason why these duties were to be voted permanently; he could not account for it on any principle of wisdom, prudence, or common sense; it would not increase the revenue, it would not give additional security to the public creditor, it was not wished for by the merchants, on the contrary, they were decidedly against it. Why then would the right hon. Gentleman persist in voting these duties, even when he knew they must be revised in a short time, for the reason he had before stated? If the right hon. Gentleman would consent to propose them for one year, he would not oppose them, because he knew that no other duties were prepared; but if he persisted in his intention of then voting them for ever, he should move to insert in the clause these words of limitation, viz. "from the 25th March, 1804, to the 25th March, 1805."

Mr. Corry said, he really felt himself, in some degree, at a loss to answer the arguments, if arguments they could be called, which the right hon. Gentleman had urged against this measure, on the ground of the duties being voted without limitation; and the inference which he seemed to draw was, that if they were now voted in that manner, Parliament would not have complete power to alter, revise, or repeal all, or any part of them, which might be deemed necessary. If a young man, not possessed of any parliamentary experience, new to the forms and proceedings of that House, were to make such an objection, the House would excuse him: but
he

he would be informed, that if he supposed, that because a bill was passed without any limitation, it must of course be perpetual, he was labouring under a complete error. He would be told that it was the uniform practice of the British Parliament to vote all duties and taxes permanently, and that they never felt any shame on altering or repealing any of them, if circumstances should change and render it necessary. Indeed, it was now the practice to introduce into bills a clause allowing them to be altered or repealed in the same session; and he recollected when, in compliance with this wise and salutary practice, he introduced a clause of that kind, the hon. Gentleman accused him of having introduced it merely from a conviction that the measure he was proposing was erroneous, and that it would be necessary to repeal it.

Mr. Foster said, he never meant to contend that it was not in the power of Parliament to alter or repeal a bill, though it had been voted without limitation.

Mr. Corry said, that there was then an end of the argument upon the subject, for the whole of the right hon. Gentleman's objection had turned upon the impropriety of voting the duties for ever. Indeed one part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech was a complete answer to the other, for at one time he urged the impropriety of voting the duties for ever, and at another he contended that they must in a very short time undergo a complete revision. With regard to what the right hon. Gentleman had said, about the duty on the export of linen, he had so frequently answered those objections, that he was almost ashamed again to occupy the time of the House upon the subject. But he believed he must follow the example of a great man in that House, who having frequently answered the objections that were made relative to the American war, and finding the same objections constantly repeated, at last declared "that whenever any Gentleman on the other side made his American speech, he would read his American speech in reply." He would therefore shortly restate the principle upon which that measure was founded. It was this, that the manufactures of the two countries ought not to be sent to foreign countries under different burthens. He begged the right hon. Gentleman for one moment to consider what he would feel if any English Member were to move that the British linen should be exported free of duty, while Irish linen was to be subject to duty; he would instantly exclaim against it on every principle of justice and equality; and this was what he asked on the

the part of Ireland. There was not one article of British manufacture that was not subject to this export duty. Her woollen manufactures, her glass, her hardware, her pottery, all were subject to this duty, except only cotton, and there the export duty was commuted into a duty on the import on the raw material. There was not a single article used in the British manufacture of linen that was not taxed on importation, except flax: ashes paid a duty on importation into England—they were imported duty free into Ireland; barrilla paid a duty on importation into England—it was imported duty free into Ireland; brimstone paid a duty on importation into England, while it was imported duty free into Ireland; and so through every article used in the manufacture of linen: every one of them paid a duty on their importation into England, and every one of them was imported duty free into Ireland. These were the advantages which the Irish linen manufacture possessed over the English one; and in addition to this, the right hon. Gentleman now proposed that when English and Irish linens were exported in the same ship to the same market, the English linen should pay 4 per cent. and the Irish linen should be exported duty free. He asked could this be contended upon any principle of justice? He was sorry to be obliged to make this statement, but the right hon. Gentleman forced him to do it. The right hon. Gentleman said that the persons concerned in the linen trade objected to this measure; but it was not natural that the persons engaged in the trade should view the subject in so extensive a manner as Parliament. He meant not to accuse or speak with the slightest disrespect of the persons engaged in the linen trade of Ireland; he knew they were intelligent, liberal, loyal men, and he was convinced they would not object to a burthen which was necessary to maintain a contest with an enemy, whose object was the destruction of the trade, independence, and happiness of both countries. The right hon. Gentleman had endeavoured to hold him out as the first person who proposed a duty on the export of linen. It was not he that had done it, it was the necessity of the empire, it was the pressure of circumstances that rendered these measures necessary in both countries. It was not therefore right to hold up any individual, or even Parliament to censure, for doing that which could not be avoided, and which was necessary for the salvation of the empire. With regard to the objections which the right hon. Gentleman had made respecting foreign herrings and hops, he had

before answered them. Upon the whole, therefore, he contended, that by voting these duties in the manner he had proposed, the interests of the Crown would be more effectually provided for, the public creditor would obtain greater security, and the manufacturer would have as ample means of obtaining redress as if the duties were voted annually.

Mr. Burroughs agreed with the right hon. Gentleman who moved the amendment, as to the propriety of allowing time to the Irish merchants, and other persons interested, to inquire into and communicate their opinions upon the different taxes. This was the more necessary as the schedule of those taxes was only printed and delivered on Tuesday last, since when even the Members of that House had scarce had time to examine it. The general principle laid down by the right hon. Gentleman on the Treasury Bench, as to the justice of equal taxation upon the same manufactures of both countries, he did not mean to dispute; but as it appeared to him, the question to consider was, how far the peculiar state of the manufacture in each country would justify the House in acting upon such principle; and here it was material to be recollected that linen was the staple trade of Ireland.

Mr. Corry said, that the schedule of the taxes laid before Parliament last session was very generally circulated among the merchants in Ireland; but he was ready to admit that there was some difference between that and the schedule now before the Committee.

Lord Castlereagh recommended, that time should be taken to examine and compare the schedule now before the Committee with that of last year, which his right hon. Friend had stated to have been circulated among the persons interested in the taxes referred to; and if any substantial difference should be found to exist, he was sure that his right hon. Friend would be as unwilling as any Member of the House, to press the adoption of the bill until the Irish merchants should have full opportunity to canvass the merits, and to state their opinions upon every part of the schedule: at the same time he begged to call to the recollection of Gentlemen, that three years had now nearly elapsed since it was known to be in contemplation to render those taxes perpetual, that is to say, to assimilate the concerns of the Irish revenue to the practice which prevailed in this country; and to the soundness of the principle, he conceived, no objection could be offered, for either the proposed annual review of those taxes must be a mere

mere trade, or the public creditor must be, in a great measure, insecure. The noble Lord then moved, that the chairman should be directed to report progress, and ask leave to sit again.

Mr. G. Ponsonby expressed his hope that that postponement was a prelude to the abandonment altogether of this obnoxious plan of taxation.

Mr. Fox said, that if it was intended to render those taxes perpetual, notwithstanding all that had been urged to the contrary, the House might as well come to a vote on the subject that night; but if the proposed delay was merely a temporary retreat from a conviction that it would be more decorous to give apparent time for the consideration of the schedule, and that the time of the House was meant to be again occupied with the same discussion, he could not forbear to condemn such an expedient.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* observed, that no Gentleman was entitled to assume from any thing that had fallen from his noble Friend, that it was at all intended to abandon the proposed assimilation of the mode of taxation in Ireland, with that which existed in this country. The only delay proposed in the progress of the measure was until the next day, and the only motive of that delay was to give an opportunity to his right hon. Friend (*Mr. Corry*) to compare the two schedules for the purpose described by his noble Friend.

Mr. John Latouche pressed strongly for further time, from a sense of duty to a great proportion of his constituents, the merchants of Dublin, who were particularly interested, and whose opinion ought to be consulted before such a bill were suffered to pass the House.

The motion was agreed to, that the chairman should report progress, and ask leave to sit again the next day. The House resumed, and the chairman obtained leave accordingly.

VOLUNTEER REGULATIONS BILL.

The House having resolved itself into a Committee on the volunteer bill,

Mr. Secretary Yorke, after proposing several verbal amendments, which were agreed to, called the attention of the Committee to an amended clause, with respect to the power to be given to commanding officers to dismiss any of the members of their respective corps. No law upon the subject had, he said, given them that power, but that they pos-

ferred it there could be no doubt. A commanding officer had the command of the muster roll, and could strike out whom he pleased. He proposed, however, that no commanding officer should possess this power, when the corps he commands are called out into actual service in case of invasion, or the appearance of invasion, as in that case the volunteers would be placed in the same situation as regular regiments, the public would have an interest in their services, and no commanding officer ought to possess the power of dismissing any one of them. He also intended to propose that this power in a commanding officer of a volunteer corps should be limited. He certainly thought that the exercise of this power ought not to be left to the caprice of a commanding officer, and he therefore considered it necessary to state some of the cases in which that authority should be used, such as disobedience of orders, misconduct whilst under arms, neglect of attendance, &c. adding likewise, or for any other sufficient cause at the discretion of such commanding officer. He was extremely averse to the establishment of any court of appeal upon this subject, because he did not wish to fetter commanding officers of corps; but at the same time he thought it necessary that a door should be left open, by means of a provision, leaving it in the discretion of his Majesty to institute, through the medium of the Lord Lieutenant, a court of inquiry with respect to the dismissal of any volunteer. It was likewise his intention to propose, that where any rules or regulations for the government of the corps had been acceded to by his Majesty, nothing in this clause contained should tend to abrogate those rules or regulations.

On the suggestion of Mr. Sturges Bourne, words were inserted to prevent the power of dismissal entrusted to the commanders of corps extending to any commissioned officer.

Mr. Fox thought, that the clause went to give a power to commanding officers of corps, which ought not to be intrusted to any man. Volunteers, it was well known, were entitled to certain exemptions: power was here given to a commanding officer to deprive a person on a sudden of all these exemptions; and not only that, but in case a volunteer was drawn (as he might be), and set aside in the list provided for that purpose, it would be giving a power to the commanding officer to send that man immediately into the militia or army of reserve. It might be said, that such a power would not be abused; but considering the number of volunteer corps in the country, they ought not to rely upon
such

such a supposition; on the contrary, they were justified in supposing that private enmity might operate in some cases to drive a man from the ranks. As to the idea of a court of inquiry, it was scarcely to be supposed, that a man thus dismissed could have sufficient influence to obtain a court of inquiry upon his commanding officer.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* agreed with the hon. Gentleman, that the clause went to give a very considerable power to a commanding officer, and yet, after considering the subject, he was satisfied that such a power could not, with propriety or safety, be lodged elsewhere. He should not, however, have consented to that clause, if there had been no provision for a court of inquiry. It had been said by the hon. Gentleman, that an individual dismissed had little chance of obtaining redress, but it was one of the happinesses attending this country, that injustice could not be inflicted on the meanest individual, without his being able to obtain redress. A great number of the volunteers were enrolled in detached companies, to each of which there were no more than three officers; if an act of injustice, therefore, was alleged against one of those officers, a court of inquiry, which ought to consist of three officers, could not be held in that company, whilst the members of it might probably object to being judged by the officers of another company: the only remedy remaining therefore was to leave in the hands of the Lord Lieutenant, the power of instituting a court of inquiry with respect to cases of alleged injustice in the dismissal of volunteers.

Mr. Ward thought the amendment of "other good causes" rendered the specifications which preceded them altogether superfluous.

Lord Castlereagh considered the mode of appeal proposed the best that offered. As to the principle of allowing commanding officers of volunteer corps the power of discharging their men, the colonels of all the regiments in the army had a similar power, and it was essential to military discipline that such a power should be vested in them. If a volunteer commander should discharge a man without just reason, such man could have his redress.

Mr. Fox begged to set the noble Lord right. The colonels of regiments had not the power, of their own sole will, to discharge their men without any previous trial or court of inquiry; at least it was a power that was never known to be exercised. The clause before the Committee, therefore, proposed

proposed to confer a power on volunteer commanders far exceeding that possessed by any other description of officers. He argued forcibly that a volunteer commander should be obliged to state his reasons for discharging a man, or otherwise the mode of appeal proposed against the abuse of this power would be quite impracticable. He ridiculed the idea of declining, from the pretext of humanity, to make it imperative on those commanders to state their reasons for dismissing any volunteer.

General Loftus said, that in the course of his service he had never known an instance of a colonel of any regiment discharging a man from the service on his own authority solely, as the noble Lord on the Treasury Bench asserted.

Mr. Pitt thought there would be a hardship upon the volunteer; for he might be on the sudden, without knowing any reason for it, rendered liable to be ballotted for the militia or army of reserve. Now he had no difficulty in saying, that the ground on which the commanding officer might dismiss a man could be easily stated in general; the grounds which were stated in the bill might be easily assigned by the commanding officer, such as want of attendance, want of attention, and that which was the effect of the other two faults, want of discipline; these were causes which the commanding officer might easily allege for his discharging a man. But there was another reason of as much force in causing the discharge of a man as any other, and which could not with any propriety be alleged for dismissing him, and that was his character, he meant the badness of his character, which might be of such a kind as that others might not like to act with him; and yet this reason could not in the nature of things be very conveniently assigned as the cause of his dismissal, although it was in itself a very sufficient reason for it. But perhaps it might be proper to make some application in such a case to the Lord Lieutenant of the county, or else there ought to be some court of inquiry into the matter, before the dismissal took place, not by way of appeal against the determination of the commanding officer, for of that he had no idea. Now he saw no difficulty in allowing the commanding officer himself to nominate, or else to apply to the Lord Lieutenant to nominate, two or three persons as a council or court martial, or court of inquiry, to judge of the case, and determine upon it, and that if their determination should be approved of by the commanding officer, then such commanding officer should have power to dismiss

dismiss such person, for any of the causes enumerated in the bill, or for any other sufficient cause: but he confessed he thought that before any man was dismissed, an inquiry should be instituted into his case, and that it should not be left wholly in the discretion of the commanding officer, who would really not think the Legislature used him well, by imposing upon him the burthen of deciding in all cases by his own discretion, and leaving to him all the responsibility which must belong to the exercise of such a power as this clause was calculated to bestow upon the commanding officer.

The *Secretary at War* said, it did appear to him, that the court of inquiry suggested by the right hon. Gentleman was the more objectionable one of the two, and that the inquiry on a man's character was more objectionable than an inquiry on any fact that was alleged against him.

Sir W. Geary saw some difficulty in procuring officers by whom an inquiry should be instituted; he was therefore inclined to think, that the better way would be, to give the proposed power to the commanding officer.

Mr. Rafe observed, that there was great force in what had been said by his right hon. Friend near him (*Mr. Pitt*) upon the hardship to which a man in a volunteer corps might be exposed when discharged on the sudden by his commanding officer, for he was immediately subject to the militia and the army of reserve. He had no idea that any appeal should be allowed against the decision of the commanding officer, that would be repugnant to all ideas of military discipline; but what he meant was this, that any volunteer discharged by a commanding officer should be at liberty to apply to the Lord Lieutenant, who should, if he thought the person not culpable, have power to exempt him from ballot in the militia and the army of reserve, but not by any means to restore him again to the volunteer corps out of which he had been discharged.

The question was put, whether the restricting words of the clause should be omitted or inserted.

Mr. Grey proposed an amendment that after the words "that it shall be lawful for such commanding officer," these words be inserted—"to summon a board of inquiry, who shall determine on the propriety of dismissing such volunteer, &c."

Mr. Secretary Yorke objected to this amendment. The clause, as it then stood, he said, had been acted upon in a great many instances in the course of the present war, and he believed in the last war. He admitted that the power
given

given by this clause to the commanding officer was very great, yet he maintained it was a power given in lieu of many other powers; and he apprehended, that if the House controlled his power within any limits, it would in substance put an end to all real power in the commanding officer, because this was the only mode by which he could retain any essential command. A great deal had been said respecting the commanding officer calling a court of inquiry: there was no necessity for making any parliamentary provision for that purpose, for that was the constant practice of the commanders of volunteer corps at present; but what he contended for was, that it should not be made compulsory on the commanding officer to do so. And the Committee would understand that this clause introduced no novelty in practice, for the very same power which by the clause was proposed to be bestowed upon the commanding officer, was a power already enjoyed *de facto* by all commanding officers.

Mr. Grey said, that the duty of the House was not to trust that power would always be well exercised, but to guard against the possibility of the abuse of it. The right hon. Gentleman had said, that no new power in point of practice was proposed by this clause: he did not speak against the clause on account of new power, but on account of the new effect which was likely to be produced by the exercise of an old power, for it was well known now that a person dismissed from the volunteer corps, was subject to the army of reserve, a penalty which was considerable, and which could not be commuted but for a large sum of money; and which did not attach in the last war. He was against the idea of an appeal from the determination of the commanding officer, whatever that determination might be, because to call it in question was unfavourable to discipline; but he would have the commanding officer call a court of inquiry, instead of determining such a point himself; and of the propriety of this amendment he was so well convinced, that he should take the sense of the Committee upon it.

Mr. Fox said, there were a great many regulations in the volunteer corps themselves, at least in a great number of them, that were inconsistent with this clause, and perfectly consistent with the amendment proposed in it, and that was a point worthy of the consideration of the Committee.

Mr. Pitt said, he did not understand it to be the idea of any one, that the decision of the commanding officer should be reversed in any case whatever; but he had no difficulty in saying that, in his opinion, the best way would be, for the

the commanding officer to summon a council or court of inquiry, that they might exercise their discretion on the case, not indeed like a court of law, according to the rules of special pleading, for that would be impracticable in military matters. He thought it would be better to have the discretion of two or three persons instead of one in such a case; but he believed that no person in that House would wish that any determination should be carried into effect, without the approbation of the commanding officer of the corps.

The *Attorney General* opposed the amendment, on the ground that it would be unwise in the Committee to reject a clause which had so much of utility for its object, until they were satisfied what it was that was to be proposed in lieu of it; and therefore he thought that unless Gentlemen on the other side who opposed the clause should state distinctly and specifically what they intended to be substituted for it, the Committee ought to vote for the clause, because otherwise the Committee might have as much, perhaps more, objection to that which was to be proposed afterwards than any body had to this clause; and it was indeed difficult, if not impossible, to offer any thing upon such a measure as this, that was not liable to some, or even to considerable opposition.

Mr. Grey did not think the doctrine of the learned Gentleman sound, when he said that no clause ought to be negatived by a Committee, however faulty it might be, unless the person who objected to it, had a precise form of words to offer instead of it; but in this case the substance of what he had to urge in favour of the amendment was so obvious to the Committee, that it would be no great tax even on the ingenuity of the learned Gentleman to put it into a specific and intelligible form of words. He could also do the same thing himself very soon, if the Committee adopted the amendment for the purpose of making way for it.

Lord Castlereagh was totally averse to the idea of establishing a court of inquiry, instead of committing the case to the discretion of the commanding officer. He apprehended great danger by clogging the discretion of a commanding officer in cases of this description. He thought the Committee would do well to consider what had been the case with Ireland in the late rebellion, and what would have been the case with it if there had not been powers so considerable given to the commanding officers there. He did not say that this was at this time, or was likely to become the condition of England; but it was possible that the

condition of this country might be changed materially from what it is at present, since we might naturally look for a continuance of this contest for a considerable time at least, and it was impossible to say what discontents might not arise, and how essential it might be that the commanding officer should have prompt means of removing those in whom he could have no confidence in the field. Besides, without this power of dismissal the commanding officer would not be on an equal footing with any volunteer in the ranks in point of power in this particular. At present, every volunteer in the ranks could leave his commanding officer when he pleased without assigning a reason for it, and it was but fair that the commander should have a power to the same extent to dismiss a man, as such man had to dismiss himself; as it was lawful for a man to discharge himself, so it should be lawful for the commanding officer to discharge him.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* adopted entirely the sentiments of the *Attorney General* upon this occasion; and he thought, if the power proposed by the clause should be withheld from the commanding officer, and he was to act under compulsion, it might create disunion in the volunteer service, a thing to be avoided as much as possible, and at all events.

The *Attorney General* repeated his objections to the amendment, and enforced his former arguments in favour of the original clause.

Mr. Fox said, that the commander of a volunteer corps was not bound by the present bill, for any thing it contained at present, to state the grounds on which he should dismiss any one from the corps: and that was what was, generally speaking, odious to an Englishman, for he might be discharged without knowing his crime. But it was said, it was probable the commanding officer of a corps would assign reasons why he discharged any man; the meaning of that observation, as far as it had a meaning, was, that he ought to state his reasons for so discharging a man. Now, if he ought to state them, why not compel him to state them? Why should a man do any thing which was right without assigning his reason for doing it? As to negating this clause, and the objection of the learned Gentleman to that mode, because no precise form of words was ready to fill the blank which the negative would occasion, he must observe, that it was the constant course of that House to negative that which it disapproved, without agreeing beforehand what should supply it; and indeed it could not be otherwise, for
until

until the thing objected to was removed, there was no room for what should be substituted. Besides, it did not necessarily follow that any thing was to be substituted for a clause which the Committee might reject, for it might pass on to the next without further notice of the provision it negatived: but if the doctrine of the hon. and learned Gentleman was to be followed, then, while there remained any variety of opinion in the Committee as to the measure which ought to be adopted in lieu of a measure which the Committee disapproved, the Committee must be content with that which it disapproved. By this perhaps the House could never be able to divide at all upon any measure, for it was hardly conceivable how the House should agree in the first instance to any measure which was to succeed a bad one, which was generally disapproved of; that could not be the case, for what was to succeed any measure ought to be matter of discussion.

Mr. Pitt saw no difficulty whatever in the present amendment, on account of the want of a specific form of words to succeed those proposed to be left out, and he had sketched something to that effect to obviate the further use of that objection, which did not appear to him to be very good logic; for surely it was competent to the House to say it did not approve of a certain measure, before it had determined that another measure, or whether any measure, should be adopted instead of it. He thought there was better security in having three officers than one to judge of such a case as this. He then stated the substance of what he thought might without impropriety be adopted in lieu of this clause, which was, that it shall be lawful for a commanding officer of a corps, to require a number of officers of such corps, to examine and pronounce on any allegation of disobedience or misconduct, or want of attention, negligence, &c. and if they report their opinion that such person ought to be discharged, and the commanding officer approve thereof, &c. then such person to be discharged, &c. That, or any other form which had that substance, he should approve, and that was the idea for which he should vote on the question then before the Committee.

Mr. Secretary Yorke argued against the amendment, as involving a total alteration of the volunteer system; and the arguments upon which it was supported, appeared to him to be of a similar kind with those used by the opposers of the volunteer system.

The question being at length loudly called for, a division took place, when there appeared,

For the amendment

69

For the clause as it originally stood

116

Majority

47

On our readmission to the gallery, the Committee were proceeding with the discussion of the clause respecting the levying distresses in certain cases, when

Mr. Pitt took occasion to express his regret at the change of opinion which had taken place on that point, as it clearly appeared to him that the mode of proceeding to a distress, was more oppressive as well as less efficacious than the alternative of commitment for a short period.

Mr. Burland adverted to the clause he had proposed on a former night, relative to this part of the subject; he had since shaped a clause agreeably to the suggestions of the right hon. the Secretary at War, the effect of which was, that an interval of seven days should be allowed for the payment of fines, &c. This was agreed to by the Committee, as was a clause proposed by Mr. Secretary Yorke, to prevent the undue accumulation of fines.

Mr. Secretary Yorke proposed two other clauses, the one respecting the powers of commanding officers with respect to the misconduct of volunteers; and the other relative to the exemptions of the servants of farmers enrolled in volunteer corps. These, as well as a third clause proposed by the right hon. Secretary, respecting the remuneration to be given to the clerks of the deputy lieutenants, &c. were severally agreed to by the Committee.

Mr. Pitt stated, that he had two clauses to propose. The first went to give a power to commanding officers, in case of volunteers absenting themselves from exercise, except in cases of illness duly proved, to levy a fine not exceeding 5s. for every day a volunteer shall absent himself, and if the person liable to the fine should not be chargeable with the poor's rates, &c. that the said fine should not exceed 1s. The second went to impose, in cases of neglecting to attend for three successive days, the sum of 40s. and the sum of 5s. for every subsequent non-attendance, &c.

Mr. Secretary Yorke conceived it his duty to oppose the introduction of such enactments into the bill. He was of opinion, that instead of ameliorating, they would greatly tend to overfet the system. He was adverse to the principle

ciple of applying, except where it could not be avoided, parliamentary regulations to things of the kind; and in illustrating these positions, he referred to certain regulations adopted in the defence act.

Mr. Pitt observed, that he did not mean to trouble the Committee by taking their sense upon the points, though he conceived such regulations would be highly serviceable. The observations of the right hon. Gentleman, in reference to the defence act, did not apply to the points in discussion, as in the one case the enrolment was compulsory, in the other voluntary. He deprecated the idea of such regulations involving a breach of faith, especially when the unlimited power of resignation was remembered: so far from Parliament being implicated upon the occasion, those things were expressly left to the regulation of his Majesty's Ministers, and that they were not properly arranged, was because the Executive Government did not think fit to provide the necessary regulations.

The questions were then put on the above amendments, which were negatived by the Committee.

The clauses, &c. being entirely gone through,

Mr. Secretary Yorke said, that with respect to the future progress, he would propose that the report be immediately received, that the bill with the amendments should then be printed, and that the report should be further considered on Thursday, if no other business stood in the way, or on Friday.

Mr. Pitt observed, that the motion which he had given notice of for Thursday, it was his intention to make on that day.

Mr. Secretary Yorke took the opportunity to observe, that it would be proper Ministers should have some previous information as to the nature of the right hon. Gentleman's intended motion: he would therefore submit the propriety of a communication from the right hon. Gentleman on that head.

Mr. Pitt said, it would be obviously irregular at that moment, before the Chairman had quitted the chair, to make the desired communication.

The House then resumed, and *Mr. Alexander* brought up the report, which was received *pro forma*. The House ordered the bill, as amended, to be printed, and to be taken into further consideration on Friday next.

Mr. Pitt then explained more minutely what was the object of his intended motion. He said that he had indeed already

already communicated the substance of his motion to one of the Lords of the Admiralty, from whom he thought Ministers might probably have heard it. It was his intention to move for an account of the number of that description of force which is best calculated to repel the attacks of the enemy at the present moment, that we have now in commission, he meant frigates, sloops, cutters, and all the smaller description of armed vessels which were capable of sailing in shallow water, and defending our coast. He meant also to move for an account of a similar nature, with respect to that species of force in the year 1801, with a view of comparing them together. He should also move for an account of the naval force of the country of another description, namely, ships of the line, which we had in commission in the year 1793, and in the year 1801, and also the amount of those which had been launched since that period, or which may have been laid down, or be building in his Majesty's dock yards. The number of seamen which were employed in his Majesty's navy at those different periods should also be an object of his motion. Upon the whole, as it was his wish to have every information which could lead to a fair comparison of the state of our naval defence at different times and under different circumstances, he could not positively say that it might not possibly branch-out to other heads than those which he had already stated.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer presented certain accounts relative to his Majesty's civil list, the titles of which were read by the clerk. The papers were then, on the motion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, ordered to be referred to the Committee appointed to take into consideration the state of his Majesty's civil list.

The other orders of the day were disposed of, and the House, at half past 12 o'clock, adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

TUESDAY, MARCH 13.

The bills before the House were forwarded in their respective stages, and some routine business was disposed of.

Sir J. W. Anderson, attended by several Members, brought up Alderman Boydell's lottery bill from the Commons.

The Irish priests and deacons orders' bill was presented by Dr. Duigenan, and a few private bills were brought up by Mr. Baldwin and other Gentlemen.

On the question for the first reading of Alderman Boydell's lottery bill being put,

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The *Earl of Suffolk* rose, not to oppose the bill, which he was rather friendly to, but to make a few observations upon a subject of some national importance, and which he conceived in some degree connected with the measure under consideration. What he principally alluded to was the present state of the art of engraving in this country, which he conceived, either in consequence of the neglect of the artists employed, or of having in general fallen into incompetent hands, to have considerably declined of late. In former periods the superior execution of the English artists in that line, not only enhanced the credit and reputation of the country in that respect, but produced effects of no small consideration as to its commerce and revenue. The first English print which found its way to the continent was, he believed, the fine engraving from the picture of the death of General Wolfe; this was executed by that ingenious and admirable engraver, Mr. Woollett, who had bestowed great pains and trouble, and employed an interval of three or four years in producing that exquisite specimen of the art: these successful exertions deservedly gained in the event 6000*l.* or 7000*l.* There was also another engraving, namely, the battle of La Hogue, which did the greatest honour to the artist who engraved it, and by which, he believed, the sum of 4000*l.* or 5000*l.* was deservedly gained. He adverted to these facts chiefly to shew what English artists were capable of performing, and who at one period were unrivalled by those of any other nation. This, he was sorry to have occasion to observe, was far from being the case at present, and to this cause was perhaps chiefly to be attributed the defalcation which of late years the revenue experienced on that head, in consequence of the diminished exportation of the article alluded to; and this amounted to a very considerable sum. He repeated, that he did not mean to oppose the bill; he had the highest respect for the worthy Alderman in whose behalf it was brought forward, and whose spirit and exertions in the line in question deserved the highest encouragement and applause. To him no part of what he had observed was applied; but he thought it incumbent upon him to take the opportunity to throw out what forcibly struck him, in the hope that what he said might be productive, in some degree, of beneficial consequences.

The bill was then read a first time.

The *Lord Chancellor* quitted the woolsack, and observed, that he partly concurred in what had fallen from the noble
Earl

Earl who had just spoken : but first, with respect to the bill itself, he observed that he was not friendly to the general principle of bills of that description ; they should be very cautiously admitted, and sanctioned by the Legislature only upon very particular and special occasions. In the present instance, the support which he gave the bill just read, proceeded from the very high sense he entertained of the merits of the very respectable magistrate who solicited the measure, to whose great and spirited exertions in bringing the sister arts, which were the subject of the bill, to the very high state of perfection in which they then manifestly were, the public and the country owed much, and on that ground he agreed with the noble Earl, that great indulgence and encouragement were due. After some further observations on this point, the noble and learned Lord proceeded to observe that he agreed with the noble Earl, that the arts alluded to had of late years considerably declined in this country, and that its commerce, in those respects, was by no means in so flourishing a state as it had been ; but he differed from his Lordship as to the causes of these effects ; they were by no means, he thought, owing to the decline of talent or perseverance in this country, to the want of eminent painters, or adequate engravers ; but the falling off was, in a great degree, to be attributed to the unprecedented and unjustifiable conduct of a certain nation on the continent, whose exertions were calculated to draw, as to a common centre within itself, every thing that was rare or valuable of the kind, and which had hitherto been suffered to remain unmolested in other countries ; and this they effected, not by the fair and ordinary mode of purchasing such articles, but by the unexampled practice of forcibly taking them from the respective countries to which they belonged.

The other bills brought up from the Commons were then severally read a first time ; after which the House adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TUESDAY, MARCH 15.

Mr. Corry moved a new writ for the city of Dublin, in the room of John Claudius Beresford, Esq who has accepted the office of Escheator of Ulster.

An account was presented from the Stamp Office of the arrears and balances due from the distributors of stamps. Ordered to lie on the table.

Mr. Vansittart moved that a Committee be appointed to prepare

prepare an account of the allowances to adjutants and serjeant-majors in the militia. Ordered.

Mr. Vanfittart moved that a Committee be appointed to prepare an estimate of the pay and cloathing of the militia for Great-Britain and Ireland.

The neutral ships bill was read a second time, and ordered to be committed the next day.

The Irish malt bill went through a Committee, and the report was ordered to be received the next day.

Mr. Hawkins Browne presented a petition from the executors of James Wright, Esq. late governor of Georgia, praying for a remuneration for the losses he had sustained in that province.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* stated, that he was empowered to communicate his Majesty's assent to the reception of the petition; but, at the same time, he would not pledge himself to any approbation or support of the matter which was contained in it. He then moved that a Committee be appointed to examine into the merits of the petition. Ordered.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* rose in pursuance of a notice he had given in the last session, and renewed in the present, to move for a Committee to inquire into the difference of duty that ought to prevail between malt made from English barley, and malt made from Scotch barley and big. By the act of union, it was provided that Scotland should only contribute one-half of the malt duties then subsisting. When the last duty was imposed, in consequence of a representation from the landed interest in Scotland, Parliament was induced to lay a smaller duty on malt made from Scotch barley, than upon that which was made from English barley. In making this motion to inquire whether any difference should subsist, he did not mean to admit that there could be the slightest question upon the act of union; he only did it in compliance with the wishes of the landed interest of Scotland. He was desirous not to give any opinion upon the question at present, or to prejudge it in any manner; his object was to have the subject fully and fairly investigated. He concluded with moving for the Committee.

The motion was agreed to and the Committee named.

Lord A. Hamilton said, as this was a question that entirely related to Scotland, he hoped that all the Members for Scotland would be appointed on the Committee.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, he should oppose any proposition of that kind, because it was a question that materially affected the landed interest of England; at the

same time, he would not oppose the nomination of any Gentleman whom the noble Lord should propose to be on the Committee.

After a few words from Mr. Coke, the Committee at first named was appointed, with the addition of Lord Douglas.

IRISH DUTIES.

Mr. Corry moved the order of the day for going into a Committee on the Irish duty bill.

Sir John Newport, after repeating his thanks to the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Corry) for the candour and liberality he had shewn, and also expressing the thanks of his constituents, said he rose to express his hopes that the right hon. Gentleman would (considering that the schedule might not have been examined in Ireland, in general, with that attention which it required) relinquish his intention of proposing this as a permanent bill at present, but that he would now consent to vote the duties for one year. He was perfectly of opinion that great advantage would result to Ireland from voting these duties permanently, and making the system to assimilate as nearly as possible to Great Britain, and therefore he only wished the delay of one session, in order to give the mercantile people of Ireland full time to consider the subject. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman, with a continuance of that candid disposition he had manifested, would feel the necessity of complying with the wishes, the feelings, and perhaps the prejudices of the people of Ireland. He thought it right to add, that it appeared to him that uncommon pains had been used in preparing this schedule, both with respect to accuracy, and to consult the interest of the mercantile people of Ireland. He trusted, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman would consent to postpone making these duties permanent till next session.

Mr. Corry said, that the measure then under consideration of the House, was one of which notice had been given for three sessions. In the last session the schedule was actually prepared, without limitation. In the present session a schedule was prepared, departing in some particulars from the schedule of last session, and it was circulated with as much diligence as was in the power of the Government of Ireland; and he had had the satisfaction, as he had before stated, of receiving the approbation of a great part of the mercantile interest of Ireland. He had received the approbation of the mercantile city represented by the hon. Baronet who had spoken so favourably of his exertions. In the city of Cork the greatest satisfaction prevailed,

ed, notwithstanding that upon some points their wishes had not been complied with. With regard to the merchants of Dublin, he wished to say a few words, because a right hon. Gentleman had said, that there were thirty-eight articles with which they were dissatisfied. With regard to these thirty-eight articles, there were in fact but four in which their wishes were not complied with. The first of these four articles was foreign herrings, the export duty upon which was not taken off, and this was done with a view to encourage the British and Irish fisheries; but even if this duty were taken off, it could not be supposed that they were not to be subject to the same burthens as British and Irish herrings, that is to say, the duty upon salt and staves, and those duties amounted to two-thirds of the duty upon foreign herrings, so that the difference was in fact very small. The second article was foreign oils. It was desired that the duty should be lowered; this had been done, but not to the extent proposed. It had been lowered to assimilate it with the duty in the British schedule, which had been laid on with a view to encourage the British fishery, and if it was placed in the same situation, he conceived that there was no ground for complaint. The third article was foreign hops: he had before stated the grounds upon which their wishes in this article were resisted, viz. to encourage the growth of British hops. The fourth article was a desire they had expressed that all duties should be taken off exports. This was a proposition which he really could not have presumed to make to the House. He wished to speak of the merchants of Dublin with the utmost respect; they were men of the greatest respectability, and in point of capital, compared with the extent of their trade, were not inferior to any set of merchants in the world. With regard to the remaining articles of the 38 which had been mentioned, viz. drugs, dye stuffs, foreign salt, deer skins, bear-skins, cocoa nuts, and a variety of other articles, which it was unnecessary to enumerate, their wishes had all been complied with. He therefore would contend that these schedules had been made with the greatest care and minuteness, and had met with the general approbation of the merchants of Ireland. But as it had been represented to him by many gentlemen of great respectability, both in public and private, that full opportunity had not been given to the merchants of Ireland to consider this subject, he was sure it never could be the desire of Ministers not to coincide with their wishes, if it could be done without injury to the public service. He was therefore disposed to comply with the wish expressed by the hon. Ba-

ronet, and only to vote the duties at present for one year, in order to afford the fullest opportunity of examining the subject; and to give every possible proof of the wishes of Government to comply with the desire of the merchants of Ireland. But at the same time that he maintained the propriety of the schedules, he was glad that this discussion had taken place, because it proved the general concurrence of opinion upon the propriety of making these duties perpetual. In consenting to move these duties for one year at present, he wished not to be understood to pledge himself that the schedule that would be presented next year would be the same as that presented this year; he only pledged himself that it should be laid before the people of Ireland time enough to enable them to consider the subject maturely. He hoped therefore that in conceding to the wishes of many of the mercantile people of Ireland, it would not be considered as any dereliction or abandonment of the principles he had advanced: he should therefore in the Committee move a clause to limit the duration of the bill to one year. There was however one point which he wished to mention, which was, that the duties would expire on the 25th of March 1805, and as the Irish Members were prevented by their military duties from attending early in the session, considerable inconvenience was felt from the duties expiring so soon; he therefore suggested the propriety of taking them for five quarters instead of four.

Mr. Foster said, he thought it would be better not to limit the duration of the bill, which contained many permanent regulations, but to vote the duties for one year as usual.

Mr. Corry said, he did not wish to vote them for five quarters if there was any objection to it, but he should consider this as sufficient notice, if in the early part of next session he proposed to continue the duties for three months longer, in order to give ample time to consider the subject.

Mr. Burroughs concurred with those Gentlemen who had borne testimony to the candour and liberality of the right hon. Gentleman, and said, that he conceived the notice given by the right hon. Gentleman would be sufficient to justify him in bringing forward this subject early next session.

Mr. Carr also expressed his thanks to the right hon. Gentleman for the liberality and candour he had manifested upon the subject.

After a few words from *Mr. Fox* and *Mr. Hutchinson*, the motion for going into a Committee being agreed to, the House resolved itself into a Committee.

Mr.

Mr. Corry proposed a clause to limit the duration of the bill to one year.

Mr. Foster said he would not object to this motion; but he thought it would be better to vote the duties for one year, and not to limit the duration of the bill, which contained a number of regulations which it would not be wise to limit to one year.

Mr. Ormsby said, that this bill contained a clause to enable the officers to collect all arrears of duty, and he supposed the bill of next year would contain a similar clause. There was one circumstance which he wished to mention, which was, that in the former bill there was a clause to continue the regulations respecting the American treaty during the continuance of that treaty. The clause in the present bill continued these regulations for one year, provided the treaty should continue so long.

The motion of Mr. Corry was agreed to, the bill passed the Committee, and the report was ordered to be received the next day.

CORN AND MALT.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* took notice of a petition which had been presented on the 15th of February last, on behalf of a great class of persons who were growers of barley and maltsters, grounded on a complaint against the last act of Parliament for imposing a duty on malt, that the corn act also was extremely inadequate in its provisions, partial and oppressive in its operations, and highly injurious to agriculture, and praying that the whole of the system may be revised, &c. He had reason for believing that this subject would undergo a thorough investigation by those who were the best qualified to form a correct opinion upon it; for which reason, in order that the public might have the full benefit of their labours, he intended, at an early day after the approaching Easter holidays, to submit the subject of this petition to the consideration of a Committee of that House, so far as it related to complaints against the corn act of the 35th of the King, and that such Committee should consider the matter thereof, and devise such alterations as may be necessary according to existing circumstances.

Mr. Foster wished the right hon. Gentleman to extend his views further, and to take in the whole system of the corn laws as they now stood, both with regard to England and Ireland, and put the whole law into one regular and solid system; for that the last general act which applied to that subject had produced some injurious effects upon agriculture,

ture, which had been impeded in its progress in a manner that had not been felt before the passing of that law. He thought it his duty to throw this out as a matter for the serious consideration of that House and of the right hon. Gentleman.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that this was a subject which was under the particular consideration of a right hon. Friend of his in that House, and which he would bring forward for the attention of Parliament; and the House would then have to decide whether they would go into a Committee upon the broad principle which the right hon. Gentleman had stated, or give instructions to a Committee how they were to take the subject into consideration.

Mr. Corry said, it was in his contemplation to have brought the subject under the consideration of Parliament on the renewal of the act, &c.

Mr. Alexander brought up the report of the Committee of Ways and Means.

The resolution, which was for raising two millions by way of loan on Exchequer bills, was read, agreed to, and a bill ordered to be brought in pursuant thereto.

Mr. Corry moved the order of the day on the Irish countervailing duty bill.

The bill passed through a Committee of the whole House, and the report was ordered to be received the next day.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14.

Counsel were heard in continuation relative to the Scotch appeal, the Duke of Queensberry v. M'Murdo, after which their Lordships adjourned the further hearing of the case till Wednesday next.

The bills before the House were forwarded in their several stages: among these the West India dock improvement bill was read a third time and passed, and Alderman Boydell's lottery bill was read a second time, and committed for Friday.

On the second reading of the Irish priests and deacons orders' bill, the *Lord Chancellor* thought proper to remark a verbal error which obtained in the title thereof. In the fifth article of the act for the union of Great Britain and Ireland, provision was wisely made for the security of a very important object, namely the complete union of the churches of England

England and Ireland. The words of the act were, "That the churches of England and Ireland, as now by law established, be united into one protestant episcopal church, to be called, *The United Church of England and Ireland*; and that the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of the said united church shall be, and shall remain in full force for ever, as the same are now by law established for the church of England." Now, in the title of the bill before the House it was called "the United Churches of England and Ireland," whereas in strict propriety, and agreeably to the terms of the act of union, as he had just quoted them, it should be the *United Church*. He thought it proper in that stage of the bill to call their Lordships' attention to this error, which at the proper opportunity could be regularly amended.

The bill was then ordered to be referred to a Committee of the whole House the next day.

Mr. Alcock, from the treasury of Ireland, presented an account of the monies issued by that treasury, for the service of the year 1803, with a statement of the disposition thereof.

When the accounts were laid on the table,

The *Earl of Suffolk* observed, that he should have to call their Lordships' attention to certain parts of them—perhaps to some parts connected with the military branch; but certainly to the expenditure of the barrack department, which he conceived to be enormous. There were already, he believed, expended on these buildings more than two millions of money, and before the erections now carrying on were completed, an additional million must be expended. He should think it his duty to call the attention of the House to this part of the accounts before them, and in order to enable him to do that the more effectually, he moved that the accounts in question be printed.

No objection being made to this proposal, it was ordered accordingly.

Some private business being disposed of, their Lordships adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14.

Mr. Cartwright obtained leave to bring in a bill to amend the condition of chimney-sweepers' apprentices.

On the motion of Lord Marsham, Sir James Earle, M. D., was admitted to the bar of the House, and after having been duly

duly sworn, he stated that John Atkyns Wright, Esq: a Member of that hon. House, who had been appointed a Member of the Middlesex election Committee, was prevented by illness from attending his duty in that House, and that according to his opinion, it was probable that the hon. Member would be unable to attend his duty for three weeks to come.

The physician having withdrawn, Mr. Wright was, on the motion of Lord Marham, excused from further attendance on the said Committee.

Mr. Alcock presented accounts of the application of money issued from the treasury of Ireland for the service of the year 1803. Ordered to lie on the table.

Lord W. Russell brought up a petition from the owners of mills, lands, and manufactories on the rivers in Surrey likely to be affected by the bill for a canal between Croydon and Portsmouth. This petition was signed by Sir Beaumont Hotham, Sir Giles Rook, and a number of other persons, owners of property to a great extent on the several rivers.

On the motion of Mr. Hurst, John Wilson was brought to the bar. The Speaker then addressed him nearly in the following terms:—

John Wilson, a select Committee of this House, which was appointed to try the merits of the Aylesbury election petition, has reported that you have been guilty of gross and wilful prevarication. In the corrupt and scandalous scenes which have been exhibited there, you have acted a principal part. A systematic plan was adopted for the bribery of the electors, which plan was so far matured as must inevitably tend to the prejudice of the freedom of election, and materially infringe upon the privileges of this House. But though by such means the privileges of the House may be violated for a time, no plan whatever can possibly be so firmly established, as to subvert or prevent the operation of those salutary regulations which the Legislature has adopted for the preservation of freedom in election, and for the punishment of offences like yours. Among the confusion and embarrassment which you created, you were the first to suffer. Your prevarication has been reported to this House; you have been imprisoned in the common gaol of Newgate, by which your character has been stigmatised, and you have suffered in your person. The justice of this House is so far satisfied; the rest of your conduct is reserved for future investigation, and you are now ordered to be discharged upon paying your fees.

Mr.

Mr. Hurst then moved, that the observations of the Speaker upon this occasion, should be entered on the Journals of the House. Ordered.

The Irish duty, the Irish countervailing duty, and the Irish malt bills were severally reported, and ordered to be read a third time the next day.

The two millions loan bill was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time the next day.

The American trade indemnity bill was read a second time and committed for the next day.

The House went into a Committee on the expiring laws bill: several resolutions were read and agreed to, and the report was ordered to be received the next day.

Mr. Secretary Yorke obtained leave to bring in a bill to amend the militia laws in Ireland, so far as respects the provision for the families of the Irish militia.

Mr. Calcraft stated, that he had heard it reported, that a right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Pitt), who was not now in his place, intended to bring forward his motion relative to the naval defence of the country on Friday next, instead of on Thursday. He would be glad if any friend of the right hon. Gentleman could inform him with certainty, on which day the motion was to be submitted to the House.

Mr. Canning declared that he had never heard any doubt upon the subject, and he was confident that his right hon. Friend intended to bring forward his motion the next day.

ACCOUNTS.

Mr. Gregor expressed a wish to move for some accounts relative to the property tax. He wished to be informed what progress had been made with respect to the property tax, and for that purpose intended to move for an account of the assessments returned to the Tax-office; if, however, there was any objection, he should merely give notice of it for a future day. He also intended to move for an account of the sums paid into, and of the charges upon the consolidated fund between the 31st of January, 1803, and the 31st of January, 1804, distinguishing each quarter. There was another circumstance on which he wished to make a remark, relative to the printing of accounts laid before the House; it frequently happened, from only one copy of an account being laid before the House, which was immediately sent to be printed, that the Members were, in the mean time, deprived of all information upon the subject. He concluded by moving for the account he had alluded to respecting the consolidated fund.

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The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, he saw no objection to the motion; but with respect to the other motion which the hon. Gentleman had mentioned, relative to the property tax, although he was not aware of any objection, yet he wished to avail himself of the hon. Gentleman's disposition to give a notice for a future day.

The motion was then agreed to, and Mr. Gregor gave notice of his intention to bring forward the other motion on Monday.

The *Speaker* observed with respect to accounts laid upon the table, that it would be for the convenience of the House if duplicates from the different offices were presented, in order that members might obtain information upon the subjects of these accounts whilst they were printing.

WAR IN CEYLON.

Mr. Creevey—I now rise, Sir, in pursuance of the notice I gave some time since, to move for certain papers and documents for the purpose of information, and as grounds for further inquiry respecting the war which the King's Government in Ceylon has lately been carrying on in that island. I should not have presumed, Sir, to take upon myself the office of calling the attention of the House to this subject, had it not appeared to me of a very limited nature, and one lying within a very narrow compass, or had I perceived a disposition in any other Gentleman to do the same thing. As the subject however, now, Sir, has been some time before the public, as it appears to me to be one of the greatest importance, as no Gentleman has appeared disposed to take it up, and as his Majesty's Ministers have not thought fit to give this House any information respecting it, I have thought it my duty to introduce it to the consideration of Parliament. As the House and the public are not in possession of any official accounts of the cause or origin of this war, of many of the transactions which took place in the course of it, and of many of its effects and consequences, I will shortly state to the House such leading particulars as, from the information I am in possession of, I believe to be true: I am certain they are mostly true, and where I am incorrect, the papers I shall move for will set me right. From the year 1795, when we first took the island of Ceylon from the Dutch, to the end of 1802, our Government in Ceylon seems to have pursued its proper objects, to have confined itself to the possession of the coasts and open countries of the island, to the introduction of wholesome laws and civilization amongst the natives who live

live under our Government, and every thing I believe, during the period I have mentioned, bore the strongest and most flattering prospect of improvement. We had never apparently during this period entertained the dangerous policy of interfering with the unprofitable interior of Ceylon, the woods, and mountains, and wild inhabitants of the King of Candy's dominions. Some time however in 1802, it seems, some subjects of the British Government had purchased in Candia a quantity of the Moka nut, and which in its way to our settlements was seized by officers of the Candian Government. I have heard that such contracts by Candian subjects are against the laws of that country; but be that as it may, our Government claimed the property, and it was agreed to be restored, or the value to be paid for it; the value, I believe, was 300l. certainly not more, and the final difference between the English and the Candian Governments was whether this sum of 300l. should be paid instantly, or at the expiration of a few months: the real cause therefore of the war which was about to take place, was the difference between the prompt and protracted payment of 300l. It was in this transaction that our national honour was supposed to be involved, for this our Government left its useful occupations, and put all the troops in Ceylon in motion to chastise the King of Candy, to invade his dominions and seize his capital. It is perhaps necessary for me here, to state that the King of Candy's dominions are composed principally of woods and mountains, affording no possible object for any rational enterprise, situated in a climate the most fatal to Europeans, and that his capital is in the heart of his dominions. Some time in January 1803 this war began, and in a very short time, and scarcely with the loss of ten men killed in battle, we penetrated as far as Candy, which we took and found the King was fled. So far we were all successful; but then, Sir, came, what our Government of Ceylon knew must come, that dreadful malady the jungle fever, that for ever infects the interior of Ceylon, and for ever destroys the inhabitants of Europe. This fever, Sir, upon this occasion destroyed hundreds upon hundreds of our troops in Candia; of the 51st regiment alone, above 300 perished; of the 19th regiment, 170 besides the 200 of the same regiment who were afterwards murdered. One should have thought, Sir, as we had thus displayed our power by the seizure of the King of Candy's capital, and putting the King to flight, as we had paid so dearly for it in the death of our soldiers, and as the

country presented no object worthy of our possession, that our Government would have instantly withdrawn the surviving troops; but it seems, Sir, our Governor was now determined to play a great part in the politics of the Candian Government; for this purpose he left a garrison in Candy to secure success to our intrigues, and from this most ridiculous and contemptible interference of ours in the affairs of Candy come all the dreadful and disastrous consequences we since have heard of. We first dethroned the reigning monarch, and put upon his throne a new King of our own choice; a person so unskilfully selected for that purpose, so universally odious to the Candians, that we finally withdrew him, and he has since been murdered on account of our partiality to him, and his own presumption. We then, Sir, resolved upon changing the Candian monarchy into an aristocracy, and we guaranteed a form of government of this species, and put the first Adigar or first Minister at the head of it. During all this time, Sir, the garrison of Candy were daily diminished and enfeebled by death and sickness: there were only left of British troops, the 19th regiment reduced to 200 men, and a Malay regiment. The House will know how to appreciate the climate of Candy when I state to them that of the 200 of the 19th regiment, 160 were sick in their cots and perfectly disabled. At this period, Sir, the town of Candy was surrounded, as I have heard, by 20,000 Candians—certainly, I believe, by not less than 10,000. Our troops, cut off from all provisions, reduced by death and sickness as I have mentioned, and the Malay regiment beginning to desert, surrendered, and laid down their arms. The termination of this dreadful tragedy we all know; upwards of twenty British officers, with the 200 unfortunate troops of the 19th regiment, were led out two by two in the streets of Candy, and there, by the orders of the very Adigar we had guaranteed in his government, they were knocked in the head and had their throats cut, and this not even with the exception of the 160 sick men of the 19th, who were dragged from their cots and murdered. About the same period all our fortresses in Candia were attacked, all the garrisons compelled to evacuate them, and all the sick in those fortresses were left and murdered. Thus ended, Sir, our invasion of Candia; it began in January, and before the end of June our invading army was all either expelled, had died, or were murdered. From the date of the event I have last alluded to, the destruction of our garrison in Candy, to the latest accounts I have seen, which are dated in

September

September last, the situation of the island became every day more alarming. The Candians, elated with the expulsion and destruction of the British, had in immense numbers invaded our settlements, from one end of the island to the other, and according to the latest accounts had left us nothing but our forts. The natives or Coolies who live under our dominion, men of the most ferocious natures, were beginning to display the most alarming spirit of disaffection to us; such of the King's troops as remained alive were still under the influence of the diseases they had contracted in the Candian expedition; and in short, such was supposed to be the danger of the colony on the continent of India as well as at Ceylon, that in the beginning of September, an expedition was fitting out at Calcutta, for its immediate assistance. The latest letter that I have seen on this subject is of the 15th of September, and is from Madras; the writer of it states as a most extraordinary circumstance that no tidings from Columbo have been received since the 4th, and from this, and from the other circumstances I have stated, expresses the most serious apprehensions for the safety of that island. Now, Sir, if this statement be correct, (and I am sure in most parts that it is so) it is I think a little extraordinary that his Majesty's Ministers should never have communicated a single syllable of information to Parliament upon a subject of so much importance. I apprehend the facts I have stated are perfectly sufficient to induce Parliament to call upon Ministers for the most full and minute particulars respecting a war apparently so rash and so impolitic, apparently so destitute of all advantage, and so evidently fatal and disastrous in its effects. It is the duty of Parliament at all times to examine into and ascertain the objects for which the brave defenders of our country are sacrificed, and it is more peculiarly the duty and the interest of Parliament to do so at this present time. There are, Sir, likewise circumstances connected with this war, and consequences arising out of it, that more imperiously call upon us to inquire into the conduct of the Governor, and which I will briefly state to the House. When we first took possession of Ceylon, it was not the least of our advantages that we took with it all the experience of the preceding settlers, the Dutch; the Dutch had made this particular experiment of subduing the Candians over and over again; they had twice, with as little loss as ourselves, seized the capital and expelled the King; but on every occasion their army was finally destroyed by the same causes which have destroyed
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ours. It is singular, Sir, that on one occasion, the precise calamity which has lately befallen our garrison at Candy befell the Dutch. The Dutch garrison at Candy were compelled to capitulate, and on their march, and within two days journey of Columbo, were to the amount of 400 men all murdered: the effect of these experiments upon the Dutch was to convince them, that all attempts upon the interior of Candy, were not only fruitless but fatal to themselves, and accordingly, for the last twenty years of their settlement in that island, such projects were never again repeated. The present Governor of Ceylon was in possession of these facts and of this experience before he doomed our soldiers to such inevitable destruction: they are recorded in a very valuable and interesting account of Ceylon, written by an officer of the army we first sent there, and the materials for which history were collected under the immediate eye of the Governor. I wish, Sir, the writer of that history had been more correctly prophetic when he says, "Our Government will doubtless avoid the errors of former European masters of Ceylon, who wasted unprofitably, in vain attempts to subdue the natives, that time and those resources which might have rendered this island one of the most valuable colonies in the world." With respect to the consequences of this war, (independent of the unprofitable termination of it, and the mortification we must feel at having our brave troops apparently so idly sacrificed) they are really, Sir, of the most alarming nature; I need scarcely remind the House of the contiguity of Ceylon to the continent of India; India is allowed to be the great object of French ambition; we act upon this supposition in all our political calculations; it is with reference to India that the harbour of Trincomalee is beyond all value; and yet, Sir, with a war carrying on in India on an enormous scale, with a French Squadron in the Indian seas, full of troops, so often said to be captured but still unaccounted for, with the French ports full of vessels and troops ready for expeditions, with a necessity at home for our regular army, more urgent than was ever known, and with that regular army more than ever neglected, we are placed in the distressing dilemma, that we must either, by withholding assistance from the Government of Ceylon, endanger our possession of that most important colony, or we must in this hour, of need and necessity deprive ourselves of a part of our most valuable and most rare species of defence. I am informed, Sir, that 1000 troops of the line are now embarking, or have embarked.

embarked already for Ceylon. I am sure such supply is necessary for the security of the colony, but I ask the House if they will permit the country to make so important a sacrifice, without a full and most minute inquiry into what has caused the necessity for so unfortunate a measure? Sir, there is another most dreadful consequence of this war. After the little discretion our Government has hitherto shewn in going to war for apparently so trifling an object, I am afraid, when the passions and resentment of our countrymen are roused by the recollection of what has lately passed at Candy, I am afraid that any prospect of peace with these Candians is very remote; I am afraid we are doomed to eternal war with this race of people, and that Ceylon, instead of being the valuable acquisition it is so naturally made for, will prove only to be the grave of our armies. I do hope, Sir, that Ministers, in their dispatches to the Governor, will not fail to remind and to press upon him the past experience of this island. I hope, Sir, they will remind him of that great lesson for all Europeans, the late fate of St. Domingo. As long, Sir, as the natives of Candia or St. Domingo shall possess the local advantages they now do, as long as the inhabitants of Europe shall be subject to the diseases they now are, I believe, Sir, that all our attempts to subdue the natives of these countries, must prove not only fruitless but fatal to ourselves. I think, Sir, if this war shall appear to have been as rash and impolitic in its origin and commencement, and as calamitous in its consequences as I have stated it to be, I think the opinion of this House will be, that there is abundant matter for inquiry into this subject: there are too, Sir, transactions of this war that I have touched upon before, which I apprehend the House must likewise think calls for particular inquiry. I allude to our interference in the politics of Candy, to our dethroning and making of Princes and new forms of Government in that country. If, Sir, we are really in earnest when we profess our respect for established governments, and our abhorrence of all usurpation; if we really wish for any character of consistency in the eyes of Europe upon this important subject, it is high time that we bestow some criticism upon these very singular transactions of our colonial governors. I am not aware, Sir, of any other reason I can adduce in support of the inquiry I wish to be instituted; but before I conclude, Sir, I beg to advert to a very cruel and unfeeling account that has lately been published by his Majesty's Ministers, purporting to be a dispatch from the Government of Ceylon, and giving an account of the number
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of our garrison at Candy. This letter, Sir, is an attempt to account for the final disasters of this war, and which rest entirely with the Governor, by insinuations the most fatal to the honour and character of a British officer, who has fought, and who has perished in the service of his country; and this, Sir, in the absence of any species of testimony on which such insinuation could be founded. I do entreat this House, on behalf of the character of this most unfortunate officer, to recollect how he was situated; there were only 200 British troops, 160 of these were sick in their beds; the remaining 40 I presume were not very healthy, they were surrounded by at least 10,000 Candians, they were cut off from provisions, and they were 60 miles from our nearest settlement: in this situation they were ordered by our new ally, the first Adigar, to lay down their arms, and they were deserted by the Malays in our service. Does any man believe it to be physically possible, that these 40 men so unhappily circumstanced, could have cut their way through all these difficulties? Of this, at least, we may be certain, that had they attempted so to do, the 160 who were sick would have been murdered. I contend then, that if in the absence of all testimony respecting the conduct of this unfortunate officer, we allow ourselves to speculate upon his motives; we are bound in goodness to believe, that he was influenced by a very natural and generous sympathy for this great majority of his sick and helpless fellow-soldiers, and that in acting as he did, he consulted what he conceived to be the best, not for himself alone, but for the whole garrison of Candy. Mr. Creevey concluded by moving for

“Copies of all papers, letters, and dispatches, from his Majesty’s Governor of Ceylon, to the Government of Candia in that island, and from the Candian Government to his Majesty’s Governor, respecting the cause or origin of the war in Ceylon.

“Copies of all correspondence between his Majesty’s Governor of Ceylon, and officers commanding his Majesty’s troops in that island, during the war in Ceylon.

“Copies of all treaties entered into between his Majesty’s Governor of Ceylon and the Candian Government.

“All the returns of his Majesty’s forces in Ceylon, from the first of January 1803, to the present time.”

On the first motion being put,

Lord Castlereagh said, he should trouble the House with as few words as possible, as, when the papers were laid before the

the House, they would have an opportunity of forming an opinion upon the subject. He assented to the general principle, that when a war was entered into in any part of our colonial possessions, unless Government could state some reason of expediency for not producing such information, Parliament had a right to possess itself of full information with respect to the origin and causes of that war. To this point the present motion went, and so far he had no objection; but he should certainly object to any motion which went to produce information as to the state of our force in Ceylon, as that would be shewing the enemy the number of troops we had in the island to defend it, and might tend to invite an attack. It might be also inexpedient to disclose the state of any negotiation carrying on in the island by the Governor. He only wished that no prejudicial impression might remain in the minds of Gentlemen. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Creevey) had stated the war to have originated in a dispute about property to the amount of only 300*l.* but the value was of little consequence; the Candian Government had long demonstrated an hostile mind towards us, and the detention of property, about which the first dispute took place, was only one of the symptoms of that hostile disposition. The form of the motion was, he said, not accurate, as Ceylon formed no part of the dominions of the East-India Company, but was annexed to the Crown; he had therefore framed a motion which he would make, if the hon. Gentleman would consent to withdraw his. He concluded by reading his motion, "That an humble address be presented to his Majesty, praying that his Majesty would be graciously pleased to order to be laid before the House, copies or extracts of such letters and papers as had been received from the hon. Frederic North, Governor of Ceylon, relative to the causes of the hostilities which had taken place between his Majesty's Government and the King of Candy."

Mr. Creevey having consented to withdraw his motion, that of Lord Castlereagh was agreed to.

Mr. Creevey then moved for copies of all dispatches and letters from the Governor of Ceylon to the British officers employed there, and from the latter to the former.

Lord Castlereagh objected to this motion, as calling for information which it would be inexpedient to produce at present, and therefore moved the previous question.

Mr. Fox was utterly astonished at the language held by the noble Lord as to the production of this paper. The

noble Lord had asserted that the time would come when no objection could exist to the production of the paper; but had he afforded any argument against its production at the present moment? Had he offered a single reason to prove that the present time was not the fit moment for its being laid before Parliament? Was it a matter undeserving of instant inquiry, that a part of our force in Ceylon had sustained not only disaster but disgrace; that blame had been thrown on the conduct of the officer who commanded that party of troops by the Governor of the settlement; and that no document was before Parliament, to enable them to ascertain whether such an imputation was or was not well founded? He could not conceive a stronger ground of parliamentary inquiry than that laid down by his hon. Friend. It was really extraordinary to hear Ministers resisting the production of information on a subject where the necessity of information was admitted by every description of mankind who chose for a moment to exercise their judgment. If this was not the moment for inquiry, he wished to know when that moment would arrive? Did the noble Lord mean to say that no inquiry should be made till the conclusion of the war? If that was to be the case, the grand object of the motion would be lost. Nothing could then be gained but the punishment of the criminal party. But the great object was to prevent the continuance of existing disasters. Viewing the motion as founded on the clearest grounds, it had his cordial support.

General Maitland thought that the hon. Member who spoke last had not fully understood the force of the noble Lord's observations. To him it appeared, that from the noble Lord's statement the production of the paper in question would be attended with inconvenience, and this was a fair parliamentary ground for refusing its production. If the state of Ceylon was such as the hon. Mover described it, he thought that the paper relative to this matter ought not to be produced. It could only have the effect of conveying dangerous information to the enemy. The first paper contained every thing now wanted. A time for the production of the others without inconvenience would arrive, and he trusted that this period was not very remote.

Mr. G. Johnstone was of opinion that any argument drawn from the impolicy of giving information to the enemy was quite inapplicable. If we looked to the situation of Ceylon, it

It was evident that before this time, the war must have come to a crisis. Our troops must either have prevailed, or been expelled from the settlement, or destroyed. Under existing circumstances, besides, it could not be conceived for a moment that the French Government would entertain the project of sending such a body of troops to India as would endanger our eastern possessions. He was therefore decidedly for the inquiry. The noble Lord had said that Government was in possession of very scanty information. This was a general complaint against the Governors of all our foreign possessions. They gave such unsatisfactory details relative to the most important events, that neither Parliament nor the Public were able to form correct opinions on the subject. The motion was calculated to procure more information, and the hon. Member who introduced it, deserved the thanks of the House and the Public. He was entitled to thanks both for the motion and the ability with which he had defended it.

Lord Castlereagh, in explanation, stated, that when he spoke of the scanty information of Government, he only alluded to the unfortunate massacre of the garrison of Candy.

Sir W. Geary supported the motion; and *Mr. Wallace* opposed it.

Captain Calcraft was astonished at the argument of an hon. General on the other side of the House. That hon. Gentleman had resisted the motion on a ground which he himself did not allow to be well founded. His argument was, that as Ceylon was in a state of weakness, it would be improper to produce documents to establish the existence of this weakness. But even while using this argument he had denied the existence of the case on which it was founded. He himself was decidedly for the inquiry.

General Maitland denied that he had used any such argument as that now alluded to.

Lord Henry Petty stated the grounds of his vote for the motion. He was astonished at the sort of argument set up by Ministers against the motion. It would be a very curious sort of argument for those entrusted with the management of a ship on a voyage, when a proposition was made to examine her timbers or general state, to say, that such an inquiry would come much better after the vessel got into port. But this was precisely the argument of Ministers on the present occasion. His Lordship declared that he doubted much whether there existed means of effectually carrying on with

success the war in Ceylon; and surely it was at least prudent to inquire into these means before a resolution was taken to protract so arduous a contest. He had heard a rumour, that the Governor General of India had determined to attempt the conquest of Candy; and that ten thousand men were to be sent from the continent of India for that purpose. It behoved the House to know the grounds of the war and the probability of success, before the lives of so many brave men were idly sacrificed. He was therefore decidedly in favour of inquiry.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* declared, that Government was in possession of no information as to any great expedition to Ceylon. He thought the first paper sufficient for every purpose of information, and conceived that the production of the others would be attended with great inconvenience.

The question was then loudly called for, and the House divided;

For the original motion 47

For the previous question 70—Majority 23.

Mr. Creevey's other motions were then put, and negatived.

MAHRATTA WAR.

Mr. Francis moved, that the 35th clause of the 24th of the King should be read, viz. "Whereas to pursue schemes of conquest and extension of dominion are measures repugnant to the wish, the honour, and policy of this nation; be it enacted, &c." That Gentleman then addressed himself to the Speaker to the following effect:—In moving to have this clause now read, I have two objects in view: first, to remind the House of their own unanimous resolution, on which the subsequent act of Parliament was founded; and then to shew that, in the motion which I propose to submit to the House, I am governed by that resolution, and aim at nothing but to enforce the execution of that law. In this purpose, and on this ground, I hope for the support and concurrence of the House; because I do not believe it will be asserted by any man, that it is very right to pass laws for the better government of a distant dominion, and very wrong to inquire whether such laws are obeyed or not. In my opinion it would be a wiser policy and a safer practice not to make any laws, than to suffer them to be slighted with impunity. Habits of disobedience are very catching; and they are the more dangerous in proportion to the distance of the offending parties, and to the facility which that

that distance gives them, to conceal or disguise their transactions. I state these principles generally, as a rational ground of parliamentary suspicion and inquiry, whenever the governments in India appear to be engaged in measures which the law prohibits; and not at all meaning to affirm, that such measures, when they are thoroughly examined, may not admit of a sufficient justification. The business and duty of this day does not call upon me to accuse any man, or to affirm that any thing deserving the censure of Parliament has been done. My object is to inquire; and then, according to the result of the inquiry, to desist or to proceed. All I contend for, in the first instance, is, that a British governor who commences a war in India, is *prima facie* doing that which the law prohibits; that his own act of itself puts him on his defence; that he is bound to justify on the case; and that, until he has so justified his conduct, the presumptions are against him. All the authorities of this country have united with one voice to condemn and forbid the carrying on war in India for any purpose but defence, or any ground but necessity. I need not tell the House that the practice in India has been almost uniformly, or with very short exceptions, directly opposed to the prohibition. While the Directors of the India Company had any power, they certainly laid down very wise principles, and gave very proper orders on this subject. When their power over their own governors was found to be insufficient, the Legislature interposed, but, as it appears by the facts, with no more success than the Directors. Since the prohibitory act passed in 1783, I appeal to the House whether we have heard of any thing from India but war and conquest; many victories, and great acquisitions, with only now and then a short interval of repose, to take breath and begin again. There is another ground of presumption against the necessity and justice of these wars, which seems to me as strong and conclusive, as any presumption can be before the contrary is proved; I mean, Sir, that almost all these wars are supposed to originate in acts of provocation and aggression committed by the weak against the strong. The strength of any single Indian state at any time, and now I believe of all of them put together, is not to be compared to the military power and resources of the English. I do not say that these nations have no means of defence, or that the Mahrattas, for example, can do us no mischief; but that, considering the great disparity of force, it requires very clear evidence to make it credible, that whereas the disposition of the British power
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in India is always, if possible, to preserve the peace, and to be satisfied with what we possess, this excellent disposition is never suffered to prevail, because the Indian princes are so restless and unruly, that we cannot, in common justice to ourselves, refrain from invading them. The fable says,—the fierce, rebellious lamb, would never suffer the mild, gentle, moderate wolf to be quiet; *if it was not you, it was your father*. These propositions may be true, but they require some proof; and, when the proof is produced, I shall desire it always to be observed and remembered that the evidence, that comes before us, is *ex parte*. We hear little or nothing of what the opposite, and possibly the injured party have to say for themselves.—Ever since I have known any thing of Indian affairs, I have found that the prevailing disease of our Governments there has been a rage for making war. The strong though ineffectual remedies which have from time to time been applied to this disorder, are a sufficient proof of its existence. That individuals may find their account in the conduct of such wars, I do not mean to dispute. But I deny that they are or can be for the benefit of the India Company or the nation, particularly in the present circumstances of the Company's affairs. In these circumstances, and in actual possession of half the Peninsula, you engage in a new war with the Mahrattas, the success of which can give you nothing but an addition of territory, which you cannot keep without an intolerable increase of your military establishments, and a perpetual drain of all your resources, of men as well as money, and which you ought not to keep if you could. Whether the Mahrattas have united in defence of their country, or to carry the war into the heart of our best provinces, as they have done in former times, or with what loss or expence our success against them may have been purchased, are questions on which we are utterly in the dark. By public report alone we are informed, that a war of great extent at least, and liable to many important consequences, is now carrying on in India, and no information of it has been communicated to Parliament. Sir, I can safely assure this House, that the Mahrattas, though not capable of meeting us in the field, or at all likely to encounter us in a pitched battle, are nevertheless very well able to do us a great deal of mischief. In the year 1778, the presidency of Bombay received and gave their protection to a Mahratta fugitive, called Ragoba, and mustered all the force they could collect to escort him back to Poonah, and to make themselves masters of that place. If
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the expedition had succeeded, I do not doubt that the persons who were engaged in it, would have been very well paid for their trouble. The event was, that their army was surrounded, starved, and compelled to capitulate. At some earlier periods of the history of India, the Mahrattas have frequently crossed the rivers and made rapid incursions into the upper provinces of Bengal and Bahar, carrying universal desolation with them wherever they went, ruining the country, and making it impossible to collect the revenues. I know no reason, why they may not make the same attempts again, and with the same success. With such bodies of horse as they can collect at a very short warning, from fifty to a hundred thousand in different quarters, they may pour into our provinces, overrun and lay waste the country, and then make their retreat with the same rapidity, without its being possible for us either to meet or to overtake them. This is their mode of making war, and it has always succeeded with them. They are the Tartars of India. In these circumstances, I ask, is it proper or not that Parliament should know, why this war was undertaken, for what purposes it has been pursued, and with what success it has been attended; and finally, has it the sanction and approbation of the Court of Directors, and of his Majesty's Ministers? I cannot believe it possible. If it should be stated, as I have some reason to expect it may, that the papers to which these motions allude, have not in fact been received by the Court of Directors, that answer must silence me for the present; but I must say that, in another point of view, it will be very unsatisfactory. The orders given by Lord Wellesley, in consequence of which the hostilities began upon the Malabar coast, must have been dated some time in June or early in July last. I beg of the House to observe the dates—we are now in the middle of March; so that eight months and a half must have elapsed since the orders were given, and no information received at home on that subject. This is a case, which the act of Parliament has foreseen and provided for. The words of the law are that, "in all cases, where hostilities shall be commenced or treaty made, the Governor General and Council shall, *by the most expeditious means they can devise*, communicate the same to the Court of Directors, together with a full statement of the information and intelligence upon which they shall have commenced such hostilities or made such treaties, and their motives and reasons for the same at large." Until it shall appear in evidence

evidence that this delay of information directly from Lord Wellesley is not owing to any neglect or omission on his part, I am bound to presume that there is a fault somewhere. Supposing the measures in question should appear, upon inquiry, to deserve censure, that cause of censure will be greatly aggravated by the neglect of sending home timely information on the whole subject.—I am not able to foresee what sort of objections can be stated to the motions for papers, with which I mean to conclude. I rather hope for the acquiescence of the noble Lord on the other side. At all events, I hope and expect that personal character, or the personal confidence due to any man, will not be alleged in bar to this inquiry. At present there is no charge, and there ought to be no defence. If I have laid sufficient ground for inquiry, we are bound to inquire. If crimination should follow, it must be answered, not by character, but by proof. When an inquiry was moved for in this House, in the year 1791, into the causes of the first war with Tippoo Sultan, no man's reputation stood higher in the estimation of the public than that of Lord Cornwallis. But I do not remember that any opposition to the inquiry was set up on the score of his personal character, though none was more generally respected. On the contrary, his Majesty's Ministers met the inquiry fairly, and thought they could not defend his conduct better than by giving us all the information they possessed. I hope and expect that the noble Lord, now at the head of the India department, will follow that example. He professes to invite and encourage a free discussion of all Indian questions. If not, and if the motion, with which I am now about to conclude, should be resisted, I think the House will be reduced to one of these two conclusions; either that there is something in the personal merits of Lord Wellesley, which entitles him to greater confidence than was thought due to Lord Cornwallis; or that there has been something in his conduct, to which no other defence can be applied but a favourable opinion of his character. I move you, Sir,—

“That there be laid before this House, copies or extracts of all dispatches received from the Governor General of Bengal, or from the presidencies of Fort St. George and Bombay, as far as such dispatches relate to or account for hostilities, now or lately subsisting between the said Governments and any of the Mahratta princes or states; with the dates of the receipt of such dispatches.

“Copies

“Copies or extracts of all the correspondence between the said Governments and any of the Mahratta princes or states, relative to the said hostilities.

“Copies or extracts of all orders or instructions sent to India by the Court of Directors of the East India Company, on the same subject.”

On the question being put from the chair;

Lord Castlereagh rose. He expressed his approbation of the candid manner in which the hon. Gentleman had introduced his motion, and joined issue completely with him in regard to the general principle, that the cause of the war is a very proper subject of parliamentary inquiry. - Independent of the acts, he was ready, his Lordship said, to admit the propriety of an inquiry, both as a matter of policy and justice. But the question now was, whether such an inquiry could be safely made in the present circumstances; and here he differed, his Lordship said, very materially, from the hon. Gentleman. Independently of the disadvantages that might arise from such an investigation, during a war not yet terminated, on which he was not disposed to lay very great stress, he had stronger and very ostensible reasons for objecting to the motion. The Government were not in possession of the circumstances that preceded the rupture; and therefore any investigation of the kind proposed by the present motion, must necessarily terminate unsatisfactorily, and to the obvious prejudice of the noble Lord (Wellesley) to whom the government of India was entrusted. Without having information as to all the circumstances that led to the war, it would be impossible to form a proper estimate of the case, or to do any justice to the conduct of the Governor General. The House must wait, therefore, till the necessary communications be received by his Majesty's Government. Such a communication was soon to be expected. That it should have been made sooner was impossible, from the date at which the war took place. It had been said, that the war commenced in the beginning of June, but instead of this it was not till the 6th of August that hostilities took place. The communications between the Mysore and Poona could not be effected in less than a month, and the latest communications received from Madras were of the first of September; there must be many documents therefore, in regard to the preliminaries, of which Government could not be in possession, and which were absolutely necessary to do justice to the noble Lord's conduct. He had no objection to the principle,

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but he was not able at present to comply with the motion. He was ready, however, his Lordship said, as soon as Government should be in possession of the necessary documents, not only to comply with the motion, but even to apprise the hon. Gentleman as soon as such dispatches were received.

Mr. Johnstone was of opinion that, though the war might not have commenced till the period stated by the noble Lord, yet that there must necessarily be many circumstances previous to open hostilities which ought to have been communicated to Government. It was not to the 6th of August only that he wished to look back, but to trace the war to its source. From the moment that orders had been given to march the troops from the Mysore, the commencement of the war was certainly to be dated. The very march of that army, he would insist, was against the acts and resolutions of the House as much as any event on the 6th of August. The moment Lord Wellesley issued those orders to his army, he ought to have sent dispatches to this country, stating his reasons for such measures. But he was apprehensive there was too frequently a suppression of documents. All the proceedings of the Government of India ought to appear on the records of the Company, and be regularly transmitted to this country. Were this the case, we should at all times have the fullest information. He was afraid that the war had originated in aggression on our part, and was owing to that spirit of ambition that had been too prevalent in India, and which particularly had characterized the government of the noble Lord. But, whatever be the issue of the war, he contended it must be disastrous in its consequences. If attended with success, our empire in India must be as large as the two Peninsulas, and consequently ready to fall to pieces by its own weight. But, should we be defeated in our attempts at aggrandizement, the most probable consequence was, that we should be turned out of India, and a period put at once to our empire. Here the hon. Gentleman insisted on the power and influence of the Mahrattas. In our former wars in India, our resources had been derived from the revenues of Bengal, which always remained untouched: but here the case was extremely different. The revenues of Bengal would be immediately affected; and, in case of defeat, or in case, which was not at all improbable, of the enemy laying waste the country, the consequences might be fatal. The present case resembled, in some degree perhaps, that of the Carnatic.

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The dispatches to which the noble Lord alluded, and for which he desires us to wait, may in all probability contain nothing. Such was the case in the dispatches from Lord Clive, in regard to the Carnatic.

Lord Castlereagh was ready to admit the importance of the communications in regard to the causes of the war; but the end also of the correspondence was certainly equally important, and absolutely necessary either to justify or condemn the conduct of the Governor General in his commencement of hostilities.

Mr. Francis thought that reasons might have been assigned by the Governor General for the issue of his orders to the troops to march, which had happened two months previous to the period alluded to by the noble Lord. He was willing, however, to rely on the engagement which the noble Lord had taken on himself, to apprise him of the first arrival of the necessary dispatches, and begged leave therefore at present to withdraw his motion.

The other orders of the day being disposed of, the House adjourned till the next day.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

THURSDAY, MARCH 15.

Heard counsel on Lady Mary Fitzgerald's claim to the Ross peerage; to be further heard on Tuesday next.

A conversation ensued on the Irish deacons' and priests' bill, in which Lord Ellenborough, the Bishops of St. Asaph, Ferns, and Hereford, and the Lord Chancellor, spoke, after which the bill was ordered to be committed on Thursday next. Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THURSDAY, MARCH 15.

The amendments made by the Lords, in the bill for improving the port of London, were agreed to, and Sir J. W. Anderson was ordered to carry it, thus amended, to the House of Lords.

When the order of the day was read, for the second reading of the Croydon canal bill,

Mr. Howard moved, "That the bill be read a second time on the 12th of April next."

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Mr. Jolliffe moved, as an amendment, "That it be read a second time this day six months."

Mr. Howard expressed his surprise at the amendment, which went to throw out the bill completely; more particularly as it affected an object of considerable importance to the inland trade of the country. The hon. Gentleman who proposed this amendment had not thought proper to state a single reason in support of his motion, yet called upon the House to agree to a vote which would destroy the property already embarked in the undertaking, and suppress the spirit of laudable enterprise in the internal commerce of the country, which had so essentially contributed to its prosperity.

Lord Wm. Russell referred to the statement which was then before the House, in which it was mentioned that 800,000*l.* was requisite for the purpose of carrying the plan into execution; and out of this sum 120,000*l.* only had been subscribed.

Mr. Somers Cocks declared, that he thought the provisions of the bill would militate against all principles of justice and respect to property. If he was not misinformed too, the weakness of the party who framed the bill, was manifested by the introduction of a clause which stated, that the canal should not be carried further than Croydon, until more money was subscribed. If the bill was calculated to promote any real and substantial public benefit, even though it should be against his own interest in some degree or that of his family, he declared that he would give it his support. But, really, he thought the House was of late giving way to a sad practice, in allowing canals to be carried on without any reasonable ground to acknowledge their utility, or any probable appearance of public advantage. It was a mischievous idea to encourage the schemes of a set of adventurers possessing no money in comparison to the magnitude of the object in the pursuit of which they were engaged. He was confident also that the present measure had no support from the persons of landed property near whose estates the canal was designed to run.

Mr. Hurst spoke in favour of the second reading of the bill on the 12th of April, upon the principle, that no evidence was before the House to induce them to negative the motion.

Sir J. W. Anderson observed, that as treasurer of the first charitable institution in the world, Christ's Hospital, he had been

been instructed to vote against the bill, which, were it agreed to, would materially injure their property.

Mr Jolliffe's amendment was agreed to, and the bill was consequently thrown out.

The Excisequer bills bill was read a second time, and ordered to be committed the next day.

Mr. Alexander brought up the report of the Committees appointed to prepare estimates of the pay and clothing of the militia of Great Britain and Ireland; and also the report of the Committee appointed to estimate the allowances to be made to adjutants and serjeant majors of militia. Ordered to lie on the table.

Leave was given to bring in a bill for increasing the allowances to innkeepers on the billeting of soldiers.

Mr. Alexander brought up the report of the Committee of expiring laws. The resolutions were agreed to, and a bill ordered accordingly.

The neutral ships bill went through a Committee. The report to be received the next day.

The Irish duties bill, the Irish malt bill, and the Irish countervailing duty bill, were read a third time, and passed.

Mr. Pitt gave notice that on Tuesday next, he should move for leave to bring in a bill to amend and render more effectual the act of last session for raising an army of reserve, and for rendering that army more subservient to the recruiting of the regular regiments. He wished to bring forward the motion in sufficient time to allow the bill, if leave should be given to bring it in, to be printed, and to lie over for consideration in the holidays.

STATE OF OUR NAVAL FORCE.

Mr. Pitt rose to bring forward his promised motion on the present state of the naval defence of the country. In introducing the subject to the House, he spoke to the following purport:—As I have reason to believe, Sir, that a part of the information respecting the naval defence of the country, which it is my wish to have laid before the House, is not likely to be refused by his Majesty's Ministers, it is not my intention, in the first instance, to occupy your time by any detailed observations. At present, I shall content myself with little more than opening the nature of the information which appears to me to be necessary; conceiving it to be understood that, if objection should arise to the production of some of the papers to be moved for, I may have an opportunity of afterwards

wards more fully delivering my sentiments to the House. The object of the first of the motions which it is my intention to submit is, that an address may be presented to his Majesty, praying that his Majesty will be pleased to give orders for laying before the House an account of all the ships of the line, fifty gun ships, frigates, sloops, gun-brigs, and other vessels actually in commission in the years ending the 31st of December, 1793, 1801, and 1803. By the production of this account, the House will be enabled to see what was the actual amount of the naval defence of the country at the end of the first year of the war in which the country is now engaged, and the war which had been commenced in 1793, under far different circumstances. I do not wish at present to enter into any detail of the actual state of our naval preparations at the present moment, but it is not surely asking too much to call for documents to shew that our preparations now are adequate to the crisis in which the empire is placed. The question now is, not what was the force at the present moment, and the force at the origin of the last war. The point for the House to consider is, what was the relative danger of the situation of the country under different circumstances; what were the existing means of repelling the dangers which threatened; what was the comparative use made of these means by the servants of the Crown? When the dangers of the country increase, it is not, Sir, surely, requiring any thing unnecessary to see that the species of defence adopted by Government was that which was most applicable to the nature of those dangers. There is, Sir, one description of force which strikes almost every man as that to which it was most expedient that a considerable addition should be formed. If I have been rightly informed, it was not before the beginning of the present year that any attempt was made to augment the species of naval defence now referred to. When the nature of the enemy's preparations was considered, it might have been supposed that the great object of the exertions of the Admiralty would have been to augment that description of force which was most particularly applicable to the peculiar circumstances of the empire. But how, Sir, does the matter appear now to be placed? It is not before the beginning of January that any contract is entered into for building any portion of this description of force, and then only 23 gun vessels are contracted for by the Admiralty. Of these vessels only five are to be completed at the end of three months, and the remainder
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not before the expiration of nine months from the time the contract was formed. Now, Sir, if the Board of Admiralty was convinced of the necessity of building such an additional number of vessels, how are we to account for the mode in which the contract is to be carried into effect? Is there any thing in the state of our information as to the preparations of the enemy, to justify that Board in thinking that this species of force will not be wanted at as early a period as possible, with the view of repelling invasion? Will it be denied that as far as relates to defeating any attempt at invasion, this very description of naval force is far superior to any other which can be employed? We have long since learnt that it is the object of the enemy to attempt invasion with light vessels, and a flotilla which can only be successfully resisted by vessels of a similar description. On what principle then is it that no part of these 23 gun brigs are to be completed in less than three months; and that with the exception of five, no less than nine months are to elapse before a description of force so essential is brought into activity? If the papers relative to this subject are laid on the table of the House, it will then be for Members to see on what grounds it was that such a plan was not sooner adopted; and if it was considered necessary, upon what grounds it was that it was not to be carried into effect with the least possible delay. Even in the month of August last, when measures of vigorous preparation began to be adopted in this country; when Ministers, in common with the public at large, saw that an invasion by means of a flotilla was threatened; when they heard of the different parts of this fleet collected without molestation, in defiance of our blockading squadrons; when from two or three hundred vessels, the force of the enemy in the port of Boulogne alone, was increased, since the month of November, to upwards of a thousand vessels; when it was known that this immense collection of vessels was independent of the force assembled in Flushing, in the Texel, in Helvoetsluys, in Brest, or other ports on the coast of France; when, in the course of the time which had since elapsed, Government had industriously circulated an opinion in every part of the country, that an attempt of the enemy might be expected from day to day; when it was allowed that the delay in the execution of the long threatened attempt arose merely from the immense scale of the enemy's preparations, a scale of preparations indeed not even apprehended in imagination at the origin of the war: when all these circumstances were deliberately compared, is it not extraordinary that the Board of Admiralty

Admiralty did not sooner think of some means of meeting the force of the enemy with suitable means of protection against attack? But it is not only on the general augmentation of the enemy's force in Boulogne that I would on the present occasion rest my argument. The fact is, I believe, Sir, that there is every reason to think, that in addition to the immense collection of light vessels in the harbour of Boulogne, the enemy have at this moment in the same port one hundred and fifty stout gun vessels, to be employed in the protection of the less formidable flotilla. If there is one subject worthy of the grave and deliberate consideration of Parliament, it is certainly the subject to which I am now calling the attention of the House. If Ministers have repeatedly declared to Parliament and the public, that the period was daily anticipated, when the exertions of all orders of the state would be necessary to repel a desperate attempt of the enemy; if it was declared, in the most explicit terms, that a conflict of the severest nature was to be expected even on our own soil; was it not, Sir, natural to expect that the description of force most adapted to meet the threatened attempt would be completed with the greatest expedition? Are the House to acquiesce in the propriety of such extraordinary delay independent of all information? Are they at once to suppose that the additional number of 23 vessels was necessary, and that nine months are to elapse before they are to be ready to be brought into the service, at a moment when no species of naval defence was so essential to the safety of the empire? An additional reason for my wishing to press an inquiry into this part of the subject is, the recollection of what was done on occasions of a nature in some degree similar to the present during the late war, though certainly in no point of view equal in magnitude of interest or national danger. I can state then from positive recollection and knowledge, that the exertions made in three different years of the last war, when it was judged necessary to prepare a force of this description, were in amount much greater, and much more expedition was used in completing it than at the present unexampled crisis. The years to which I refer, are 1794, 1797, and 1801, previous to the accession of the present Board of Admiralty to power. In each of those years it was judged proper to have a number of gun vessels prepared, and a contract was accordingly made for their completion within a given period. As far as my recollection goes, the contract at that time was so formed, that a certain number of the vessels were to be completed in about eight or ten weeks.

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There was another description of them which was to be completed in fourteen weeks, and this was the longest interval suffered after the contract was accepted by the Lords of the Admiralty. The system of the Admiralty now, however, proceeds on very different principles. It is admitted that the situation of the country at present is much more dangerous than in any of the years to which I have just alluded; but with the admission of this danger, and of the propriety of an additional number of gun vessels, six months are to be suffered to pass over before even the number of 23 can be finished. Sensible that expedition is on this subject infinitely desirable, and that not a day ought to be lost in accelerating the actual service of every description of light force, it is my object that an account of the orders issued by the Admiralty for building these gun vessels should be laid before the House, specifying the terms of the contract, and the time agreed on for its completion. If this paper is produced, I shall feel it my duty on a future day to move that an address be presented to his Majesty, that he will be graciously pleased to give orders for using greater expedition in augmenting that species of naval force, best calculated for meeting and resisting any attack of the enemy, for guarding the narrow seas, and for protecting the coasts of the country. With this view I shall submit a motion to the House for a copy of all orders issued by the Board of Admiralty for entering into any contract for building gun vessels in the years 1794, 1797, 1801, 1802, if any such orders were issued that year, and in 1803, the force of the vessels so contracted for, and the time in which they were to be ready for service. By the production of this paper the House will be enabled to form an opinion how far the conduct of the Board of Admiralty has corresponded with the magnitude of the danger to which the empire is exposed, and to judge whether the species of force applicable to this immediate danger is adequate to its proposed object. It will not be denied that this view of the subject is highly interesting, and certainly takes precedence of every other consideration. But, Sir, there is another view of the subject of which no one will attempt to deny the importance. When we reflect what is the nature of the war in which the country is now engaged, we are doubtless, in the first instance, to look forward to immediate means of protection. But we should be but injudiciously discharging our duty if we did not look forward to the actual state of our naval establishment on a great scale. The preservation of the country is:

our primary object, but we have before us other mighty objects which, though remote, are not for that reason to be disregarded. The present is a war in which we contend for all that is dear to man in society, and I would have it clearly understood that it is a war of which I cannot allow myself to lose sight of the idea, that it may be a contest of considerable duration. In this view we have to consider by what means our naval establishment is to be rendered adequate not only to the great struggle which may ensue, but to give us the means of supporting our naval superiority after the great crisis has passed away. It is not for ourselves alone that we are now called on to contend. Our fleet must, even after all prospect of immediate danger is removed, be kept on that footing which may enable us to take the lead in any great effort for the glory not of this country alone, but in defence of the liberties and the independence of Europe and of the world. I shall not now enlarge on this point, but I must be permitted to say, that the existing state of our naval establishment is a subject the interesting nature of which the House cannot for a moment hesitate to admit. When a new war was entered into, and when there was reason to believe that the war would be one of some duration, it certainly was the duty of the Board of Admiralty carefully to consider what were the probable aids which the exigencies of the service might require. At present I am alluding chiefly to the condition of the ships now actually in commission. After a war which continued without intermission for ten years, and in the course of which the services of the navy had been equally distinguished by labour and gallantry, it was naturally to be expected that a number of ships were in a situation which did not render them capable of being employed without considerable repairs. In the course of the last war the number of ships of the line was as high as a hundred and twenty, by a series of the utmost zeal, activity and spirit on the part of the Board of Admiralty. It is not now my object to call for any explicit account of the number of ships at present in commission, but when I have stated what was the number of ships of the line in commission during the last war, it is not going too far to ask, whether, after that war had continued ten years, Ministers, on the conclusion of peace, took any measure to keep up this formidable naval establishment? I certainly do think that on the conclusion of peace, the permanent establishment of the navy ought to have been an object of the deepest interest, and that the propriety of supplying successive augmentations should

should have formed a matter of uniform attention. Admitting the propriety of thus successively augmenting the navy, there are two modes in which the object may be effected. The one is by building in his Majesty's dock-yards, and the other by contracting for ships in the yards of private merchants. From the history of the navy of this country, for a long series of years, it is clear that the mode of building ships of the line in the yards of the merchants is that which has been most generally resorted to. I believe, Sir, I am not carrying my assertion too far when I affirm that for a great number of years, upwards of two thirds of the ships of the line in his Majesty's navy, were built in the dock-yards of the merchants. Any man that knows any thing at all of naval affairs knows that the supplies to the navy from the King's dock yards are quite inconsiderable, and that of the ships built the greater part consist of vessels of an inferior description, in point of force, in any of his Majesty's fleets. During the late war no less than twenty-six sail of the line were added to the navy; but, Sir, these were not composed of ships built in his Majesty's yards in the course of the war, but of vessels, some of which had been laid down, five, nine or ten years before the war commenced. There were not out of this number more than two ships which were laid down in the King's dock yards after the war broke out, and they were not brought into service till a late period of its duration. What, then, is the inference from these facts? The inference I draw from it is simple. It is, that if supplies of ships may be required during the continuance of the war, and if there is no probability of procuring these supplies through the King's dock yards, the yards of the private merchants must be resorted to. But if I am not grossly misinformed, the Board of Admiralty have made no contracts to any extent for supplying any deficiency in the navy, which may occur in the course of a very few years of the war. This is a subject on which to affect concealment would be quite ridiculous. From the very nature of the contracts, and the mode in which they are invited by public advertisement, every man who has the least curiosity on the subject, may without difficulty have it gratified. He may even ascertain not only what is the number of vessels contracted for, but the places where they are to be built, the terms on which they are contracted for, and the time when it is expected they may be ready for actual service. Having taken some pains to inquire into this matter, I cannot find that since the year 1801, when the present Board of Admiralty

rally came into power, more than two ships of the line have been contracted for in any of the merchant yards. When I state this, it strikes me that I cannot urge a stronger argument for inquiry into this subject. If it is at all times an essential object that our navy should be kept in a constant state of effective strength adequate to any extraordinary emergency which might take place—if this was at all times a most important object, it was surely, Sir, more peculiarly the duty of the Admiralty at the conclusion of the late peace. At that time an establishment of fifty thousand seamen was voted by Parliament, and surely nothing can be a stronger proof of an idea that the peace was not likely to be of long duration. Ministers besides, according to their own statements, owned that the whole conduct of the French Government had been one uniform series of insult and aggression. With this knowledge, how comes it to pass, Sir, that no exertion was made to repair those losses in the navy which a war of ten years necessarily produced? We find that only two new ships of the line are contracted for at this moment; and it will not be denied that many more years must elapse before any considerable supply could be obtained. It ought not to be forgotten, that in time of war the building of ships of the line in the King's dock yards must be in a great measure suspended? On what possible ground then, Sir, is it that the dock yards of the merchants are left unemployed? If I am not misinformed, there are at this time on the River no fewer than fourteen slips fit for building ships of war, not one of which is put into use. On this point the necessity for inquiry appears to me so urgent, that without further arguing it, I shall only state, that I mean to move that an humble address be presented to his Majesty, praying that the proper officer be ordered to lay on the table the orders issued by the Board of Admiralty for the building of new ships of war in 1793 and since 1801, distinguishing the places where to be built and the period in which they were to be finished. I should think the information still more satisfactory if the account included a statement of the different species of vessels; but as this may appear liable to some objection, I shall not press it on the present occasion. If in all former wars the navy has derived its chief supplies from the merchants' yards, I should on the production of the account now referred to, beg leave to put it to the House, on what ground it is that now, when a supply is most imperiously required, only two ships of war are on the stocks in merchants' yards? This is a matter on which

which it strikes me that Parliament ought strongly to express their opinion. If an adequate cause exists, let that cause be stated; if no cause exists, then let this inconvenience be removed. A noble Lord, a friend of mine (Lord Castlereagh), a few days ago told the House a great deal about the comparative force of our navy at this moment and in former wars. The statement then given was quite general, and could not be made the ground of any particular conclusion. But there is one point to which I think it right at present to advert, as it tends to disprove one part of the noble Lord's arguments. I mean to refer to the number of seamen now employed, contrasted with the number at the commencement of the last war. At the breaking out of the last war our naval force was on a peace establishment, and the number of seamen employed was not more than 16,000. A very short time prior to the rupture an augmentation of two thousand men took place. At the end of the first year of the war this number was augmented to no less than seventy-six thousand, though the means of augmentation were not at all so extensive as those now in existence. At the commencement of the present war we set out with an establishment of fifty thousand seamen, and Ministers must have entertained the prospect of a rupture from hour to hour. Under such circumstances, and with such a prospect, what has been the result? Ministers certainly had every inducement to increase the number of seamen, and they were furnished with every means for that purpose. At the commencement of the rupture, in consequence of the prodigious increase of our commerce, the mercantile marine of the country, the great nursery for the navy, had increased in an astonishing degree. With the use of all these advantages the number of seamen, which at the commencement of the war was fifty thousand, had not been augmented to more than eighty-six thousand. In the one case there was an augmentation from sixteen to seventy-six thousand; in the other from fifty the number had only risen to eighty-six thousand. In the one case the augmentation was more than in the proportion of five to one, whereas in the other it was not even double, but was about three-fourths beyond the original amount. This, Sir, is a statement on which I am not at present disposed to comment, but when the statement of the noble Lord a few days ago is considered, it is proper that the matter should be fairly brought to issue.—The right hon. Gentleman concluded by a few general observations, stating, that he wished the production of
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of the papers at present, merely as preparatory to future inquiry ; and intimated that he meant to move for an account of the number of seamen in the first year of the last and present war.

The first of the motions relative to the comparative amount of the naval force of the country in 1793, and at the present moment, was then put from the chair.

Mr. Tierney rose, and replied in substance as follows :— I must request the attention of the House for a short time, while I endeavour to reply to a few of the observations of the right hon. Gentleman who has introduced this discussion. I am sensible under what disadvantages any man must labour who attempts to arrest the attention of the House while the eloquence of the right hon. Gentleman is still fresh in their recollection. A sense of my public duty, however, induces me to disregard this consideration at the present moment, and fairly to deliver my sentiments on the question. I have no difficulty then in declaring, that the motion of the right hon. Gentleman does appear to me one of the most extraordinary which ever was submitted to this House. It strikes me as a motion, the only tendency of which is to produce an effect which every honest man must deplore, to engender discontents in the country from one end to the other, to shake the confidence which the people have hitherto been inclined to repose in the Government, to create doubts of the sufficiency of that force which they have at all times looked up to as the firmest pillar of national security. What is more extraordinary still is, that the only object which the right hon. Gentleman has in view is to declare to the public his opinion of the noble Lord who presides over the Board of Admiralty. Where proper grounds are made out for inquiry into the conduct and character of public men, I shall never be backward in supporting motions which have this end in view ; but where no events have taken place which could excite suspicion, where there was not the slightest disposition to censure out of doors—[*Here the right hon. Gentleman was interrupted by a loud cry of hear ! hear ! from the opposite side of the House*]—I am resuming, said he—somewhat astonished at this very loud expression of opinion on the other side of the House—but I must beg the liberty of repeating my former expression : I will go further, and challenge any Gentleman in this House to point out the particular district in the country where the slightest symptom of discontent with the measures of Government has been manifested.

ed. [*Another loud cry of hear! hear!*] I am ready, Sir, to admit that in this House there is abundance of turbulence and noise, but when I go from this House into public, I am at a loss to account for so much violence among a few individuals, while in the country all is calm and tranquil. Gentlemen may choose to express their disapprobation of the opinions I offer; but this shall not in the slightest degree deter me from candidly offering my sentiments. I declare then that to me there does not appear to be a single parliamentary ground laid for any suspicion of the conduct of the Board of Admiralty. The usual grounds for inquiries into the naval department have been, that convoys have been captured or unnecessarily postponed; that the enemy's fleets have escaped, or been suffered with impunity to collect their force; that they have been able to effect partial landings on our coast; or that some instance of flagrant neglect had been exhibited. But not one of these can now be brought forward as arguments for inquiry. At a time when commerce is protected to a degree beyond almost all precedent; when all those best acquainted with military affairs are satisfied; when the country, with the exception of a few individuals here, repose the fullest confidence in the talents of the noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty; when there was a general persuasion of the conduct of Ministers being marked with energy and with wisdom, I should wish to ask the House if this is the fit moment for introducing such a motion as the right hon. Gentleman has thought proper to bring forward? I am really, Sir, at a loss to know how long ago it is since the right hon. Gentleman changed his opinion of the noble Lord, against whom he now directs his attack with so much zeal. I need not remind him of the eulogium which three years ago he passed on the noble Lord's character and professional talents. I need not recall to his remembrance his declaration, that whatever doubts might be entertained of the talents of this or that person, of Lord St. Vincent's abilities it was impossible to entertain a doubt. Whatever might be other people's defects, Lord St. Vincent was the man whom the public at large looked up to; naturally and necessarily, as the person fittest to preside over the Admiralty at a period of the most trying difficulties. Whatever reasons the right hon. Gentleman now has for changing his opinion, I believe on my conscience that the opinion of the country is not changed, but that their confidence, great as it was at his accession to power, has been augmented, instead of diminished, by the conduct

conduct which he has since pursued. Of the conduct of the noble Lord I believe the public at large entertain the very highest opinion. They have witnessed the numerous services, which in the course of a long life he has rendered his country, and they cannot fail to acknowledge that few men have done themselves more honour than the noble Lord, in his exertions to raise himself to the station which he now so honourably fills. I am convinced, Sir, that the noble Lord would lose every thing sooner than the good opinion of his countrymen; that no honours which his Majesty could bestow, that no emoluments which he could derive from office could compensate for any imputation thrown on the fair fame which he has so honourably acquired. The sort of attack made on him this evening, must hurt his Lordship's feelings more severely than any sort of imputation on his conduct. The right hon. Gentleman does not bring any charge against the noble Lord for any criminality on his part, as far as the nature of his department is concerned. He does not accuse him of any unfair bias in the exercise of his power, but he calls on us this evening to side with him, merely because he has thought proper to take up a particular opinion as to the naval defence of the empire. We are to place all on our opinion of the right hon. Gentleman's skill in naval affairs. I am ready to do justice to his great talents on many subjects which come under discussion in this House. As a volunteer, and a friend to the volunteer system, I have listened with pleasure to many of his suggestions for its improvement. The right hon. Gentleman may now have some pretensions to a right of settling the land service, but I confess it is rather asking too much to ask us to take it for granted, in the absence of all proof, that Lord St. Vincent has been deficient in the exercise of his public duty. I am not an enemy to inquiry, but when inquiry in the absence of all grounds to justify it is called for, it becomes odious and ought to be resisted. The right hon. Gentleman has founded no charge against the noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty. He has not pointed out one crime in the discharge of his official duties. He has merely chosen to conceive that enough has not been done for the public security, and on this ground simply he requires of the House to support inquiry: of such inquiries it is quite impossible for me to approve. There is no specific act of criminality alleged. Those most interested are satisfied. The most meritorious officers are employed in the service. There exists a general feeling of confidence

fidence in the energy and wisdom of the naval administration of the country. But the right hon. Gentleman lays a great deal of stress on the circumstances attending a supposed contract for twenty-three gun vessels. On this point I shall, before I sit down, make a few observations. In the mean time I have only to say of the first motion, that it is not my intention to resist it. I should only beg leave to suggest that, instead of one year of the late war, the account should include three or four successive years, and in this way the House would be able to form a better notion of the conduct of the Admiralty than by one solitary example. As to the paper which it was the object of the first motion to procure, it strikes me that all party views ought to be put out of the question till it is fairly before the House. All that I have at present to say of it is, that when it is produced I am convinced Gentlemen will find the naval force of the country much greater than they were prepared to expect. I have to state now, for the information of the House, that the whole naval force of this country amounts to no less than fifteen hundred and ninety-six, composed of vessels of all the different descriptions. There are 19 Trinity House vessels, 373 gun brigs, in every point of view as efficient as those to which the right hon. Gentleman has referred. Nineteen East-India ships are employed in the naval service, and we have a flotilla of 628 vessels fully equipped, and ready at the shortest notice to proceed on any destination. (*Hear! hear!*) Now, Sir, as to the twenty-three gun vessels, of which the right hon. Gentleman said so much in his speech. He blames the noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty, that three months have been allowed to complete a certain number of them, while the rest are not to be ready in less than nine months. He is anxious to contrast this arrangement with what happened in three cases during the late war, though by the bye he himself admits that fourteen weeks were employed in building the gun vessels at that period. But, Sir, admitting the fact as to this contract to be true, though I beg it to be understood that I take it merely on the right hon. Gentleman's declaration, what mighty charge would it imply against the First Lord of the Admiralty? Whether is the noble Lord, or the right hon. Gentleman, to be considered the best judge on the subject of such an arrangement? If one part of the gun vessels was ordered to be ready in three months, and the other not before the conclusion of nine, is it unfair to presume that the noble Lord acted on a conviction that this was the

most politic mode of proceeding? The House will recollect, that the noble Lord had only a certain number of men at his disposal; and till the contrary is established, is it unjust to presume that he regulated the contracts by a calculation of the time when the vessels would be wanted, and when he could, consistently with the other branches of the service, supply them with their complement of men? The right hon. Gentleman knows that the vote of seamen was a hundred thousand. By his own vote he allowed that this was an establishment of men adequate to the circumstances of the country. With such an establishment the noble Lord could not at once attend to every part of the service. The ports of the enemy were, therefore, in the first instance, blocked up, their larger naval force was narrowly watched, and after these points were attended to, objects of less importance attracted a suitable share of attention. I see nothing to convince me that in forming this contract the noble Lord has been guilty of any impropriety, and till I see this proved I will not take so grave an accusation on light grounds. The House has no proofs of criminality before it; but the right hon. shipwright behind me tells us, that the noble Lord has been guilty of a great mistake in not getting these gun vessels built at an earlier period. He lays down the law to us, and by his sentence we are called on to abide. The right hon. Gentleman has, *prima facie*, made out no case on this point, and therefore I cannot see that the paper he calls for, as to the contract for these vessels, ought to be produced. If it is produced, it is evident that the noble Lord would have a fair claim to demand a full inquiry. This inquiry, at such a moment, must be injurious, as it would interfere with the imperious duties of some of the first professional talents in the country. For this reason I shall certainly resist this part of the right hon. Gentleman's general motion. The right hon. Gentleman has said a great deal about the propriety of, and even necessity for, laying down ships of war in merchant dock yards. He has argued that the dock yards of his Majesty are inadequate for the supply of the service, and has even gone so far as to say, that during the war they must be nearly suspended. Here again I feel myself called on, in justice to the noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty, to contend that no case of criminality has been laid down such as can be a ground of inquiry. The right hon. Gentleman has not proved, that there may not be very good reasons for not carrying the system of contracts to its former extent. The noble Lord has shewn a very laudable desire to be more anxious for the interests of the public, than for the interest of contractors;

traffors; and till it is proved by professional men; that the new plan adopted by the noble Lord, of employing the artificers in the dock yards; instead of private contractors, is improper, I cannot take it for granted that any blame has existed. The noble Lord has earned his experience by the labours of a long life. The right hon. Gentleman is hitherto quite raw and inexperienced in the shipbuilding line, and he must forgive me if I cannot yet bring myself to bow to the law which he lays down with so much confidence on the subject. To the motion for papers on this subject I have therefore the same objection, that they could not be produced without going into inquiries which it would, under the present circumstances of the country, be highly impolitic to institute. As to the paper about the number of seamen, I have no objection to its production. I cannot, however, help noticing the particular reason which induces the right hon. Gentleman to move for it. He has relied very much on the increase of seamen in the first year of the war in 1793, and the first year of the present war. The fact is, that on this point his statement was not altogether correct. He says, that there were, at the beginning of the present war, fifty thousand seamen, and that the present number is not more than eighty-six thousand. Permit me to say, Sir, that though, at the origin of the war, the number was nominally fifty thousand, it was not; in fact, above thirty-six thousand. The circumstances of the increase in 1793 are accounted for without difficulty. The country then had enjoyed peace for ten years. The evils of war were forgotten; and the hopes of rich prizes operated powerfully as an inducement to enter into the naval service. It was farther to be considered too, that at that time there was such a general stagnation of trade, that thousands of manufacturers had no other alternative than entering into the land or sea service. At this time, on the contrary, men were to be raised for the navy under every disadvantage. The militia, the army of reserve, and the volunteers, all operated as obstacles to the filling up the supplies of men for the navy. Yet in opposition to all these obstacles, the number of seamen was within less than two thousand of the hundred thousand men voted as sufficient for our naval establishment. This fact alone proves the activity, the energy, the zeal of the noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty.—The right hon. Gentleman, after a few remarks, pointing out the mischievous effects of the general motion of the right hon. Gentleman, and expressing his highest approbation of the character and conduct of the noble Lord; whose

administration had been so unjustly attacked, concluded with moving an amendment on Mr. Pitt's motion.

Sir Charles M. Pole rose, not for the purpose of assenting or dissenting from the motion of the right hon. Gentleman, but to give an opinion, in the way of his profession, as to the merits and activity of the noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty. Of that activity he could not think too highly, when he considered that within 48 hours after it was known that hostilities were to commence, Admiral Cornwallis sailed for Brest, and from that moment to this, with scarcely any interruption, has held that port in a state of the strictest blockade. The energy, assiduity, and enterprize of every officer, and of every man in that fleet, from the gallant Admiral who commanded it, down to the cook's boy, was never paralleled in the naval history of this or any other country. But it was not only the ports of the enemy, of that power who particularly deserved that name, but even those of their allies, from, he might almost say, Toulon to the Texel, that were kept blockaded by the extraordinary perseverance and enterprize of the navy of Great Britain. As to the objections that had been urged against the Earl of St. Vincent, for not employing a greater number of gun-boats, that was a difference between that noble Lord and the right hon. Gentleman on a professional question, on which, although he was not without an opinion, yet he would not then trouble the House with it. But with regard to the employment of armed-cutters, he had no motives of delicacy, and he would not hesitate to declare, that the taking of them into the service was an arrant job; a job, because the men were rarely mustered, and the vessels were mostly in port. He had his ideas with respect to the proper mode of defending the country, and those were directly against the use of such craft as had been recommended; for our shores, he was confident, would be much better secured by the service of 50 gun-ships and frigates. There was one remaining point on which he wished to trouble the House, and that was, the very considerable number of men that the admirable arrangement, and indefatigable exertions of the Board of Admiralty had procured for the navy, and for which, in his opinion, they, and the noble Lord who presided there, were entitled to the thanks and gratitude of the country. As he considered the proposed inquiry unnecessary, he would vote against the production of the papers that had been moved for by the right hon. Gentleman.

Admiral Berkeley would not have offered himself so soon to the
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the Speaker's notice, had he not been called upon by his hon. and gallant Friend (Admiral Pole), and by some evident misstatements which had been made by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Tierney). To the first he should reply that he was not aware of the jobs which had been made of gun-boats last war, but certainly could say that the gun vessels which his right hon. Friend alluded to in his motion were not of that description, but were of a class which he should have occasion to mention hereafter. With respect to the triumphant sort of flourish, which had been made use of by Mr. T. who said that no ground of complaint had been made out against the Admiralty, and that he expected to hear of convoys being cut off, and vessels taken; he should only state that something of that sort might have been alleged with justice, which he should likewise allude to by and by. But when he heard him state, that the care and providence of the Admiralty had been such as to raise the whole extent of the vote of seamen except 1700, he must suppose that he was so newly come into office, and as yet felt himself so little at home in it, that he had neither examined the truth of his assertion, nor asked any professional person if it could possibly be the case. The fact was, that he had taken the whole of the returns of the Navy Office from the monthly books of the ships, which amounted to 76,000 men, in which the marines were included; and had added the 15,000 marines which were returned to the Admiralty from the head quarters. Did he mean to say, that there were 15,000 marines at this time, who were not embarked? because certainly the fact was not so; there was hardly a marine at any of the head quarters, they were all embarked on board of the fleet, and included, as well as the 6000 impressed seamen, in the returns at the Navy Office, and consequently included in the 76,000 men; which brought the question (if it had any reference to the motion before the House,) to a state much nearer the truth, viz. that instead of the seamen being equal to the vote, which was 100,000 men, instead of being only 1700 short of that vote, it would be found that there were nearly 20,000 short of that number. With respect to the number of gun vessels which the right hon. Gentleman had chose to state, and amongst which he classed the *launches* and *cutters*, which he chose to say were *better* than the gun brigs alluded to by his right hon. Friend (Mr. Pitt), he must positively deny both the one and the other, the number and the quality. If he chose to call every cockle shell into which a gun was placed, a gun vessel, he certainly might make them out; but of those he had seen, some were unable to go out even to Spithead, unless it was in a calm.

calm. And as for the comparison, it was too trifling and too ridiculous ever to enter into the head of a professional man; but as the right hon. Gentleman was not so, he perhaps might be excused for making it. He should now come to the motions made by his right hon. Friend, which he must think not only proper but necessary, as they would not only put all questions upon the conduct of the Admiralty at rest in future, but tend to shew if they had done every thing in their power, and whether they had made every preparation for the defence of the coast which they ought to have done. In his opinion they had *not*. It might perhaps be again asked by *some persons*, Where he had gained his experience in the service to form such an opinion? How proper, how just, how wise, or how decent such a question, coming from such a quarter, might be, he certainly should not think of saying, but should leave to the judgment of the House. But it was not to his own experience, it was to the experience of much older and more experienced officers than himself he would appeal, and if every officer of high rank and knowledge in the navy were called to the bar of that House, they would corroborate what he should advance. He averred this, he averred that if a sufficient number of gun vessels of a proper construction had been built and manned, which they could have been by this time, to have assisted the frigates and ships which the Admiralty say they have in the Channel, the junction of the enemy's flotilla at Boulogne would have been prevented; and this he would prove not by *his* experience, but by facts and documents furnished to the public by the Admiralty *themselves*. Look at the Gazettes, in which the gallant young officers who commanded the frigates had told you, "we have taken one, two, or three gun boats, we could have taken more, but they escaped into shallow water, where it was impossible to follow them:" he asked, would this have happened if they had been provided with gun vessels to assist them? certainly not: but even of these frigates and sloops upon which such dependence is placed, he averred the Admiralty had not provided a sufficient number, no, not even for the common duties of the Channel; and this he would likewise prove by official documents (here he read an advertisement to contract for 14 armed ships for convoys). What did this prove? why, that the Admiralty were driven (for the date of this proposal is subsequent to the right hon. Gentleman's notice) to hire the worst and most expensive sort of vessels; *vessels*, which until this time were never resorted to, except at the very outset of a war, while the frigates, &c. were getting ready: but what does this prove? why, that the fact is, we have

have not a frigate or sloop left or built to fit out for the necessary defence and protection of the Channel. Might they not have them? certainly they might; and he was happy to find, that he was not the only officer who had offered plans for this purpose to the Admiralty. He would read a part of one of these plans, by which it would be seen, that a force might and still may be created, which would effectually secure our coast, annoy the enemy, and by not interfering with the usual naval exertion, might be instantly manned, and by that means leave the frigates to those duties for which they are so expressly calculated (here he read a part). If this plan had been adopted, these shameful contracts for armed ships would have been unnecessary, and our convoys would have been protected; as it was, 19 sail of one convoy were taken and carried into Spanish and French ports, and even between Spithead and the Downs, a very rich West Indiaman had been taken by the enemy's privateers. The system of gun boats had been much derided, and we were told they were of no use. Another official document, however, would shew, that such was not exactly the opinion of the Admiralty, for they had actually contracted for 20 gun brigs; but to make even this paltry number as ridiculous as they wished us to believe them, the time limited for their completion is half in three months, and the remainder in six. Good God! if they were of no use why build them at all? But if they were of use, why not build more, and in the shortest time possible? as it is, in six months the project of Bonaparte must have either succeeded or have completely failed. They talk of the nature of these vessels, and of their force. He did understand that one of the most scientific officers in the service had not only communicated his own ideas, but the plans of his father, who was, without exception, not only as good an officer, but as accomplished a mechanic and shipbuilder as ever was known; and when he mentioned the name of the late Sir Charles Knowles, no person would deny it. This great officer's plans were shewn to the Admiralty; what was the answer? not very gracious, perhaps, but very true. One Lord said, he was not competent to judge; the other said, he knew nothing of ship building; this might be so, and it was not actually necessary, that either a Lord of the Admiralty or a Captain should be a shipbuilder; but at least it was a sort of cousin-german duty to their own, and they ought not to talk of want of experience, when they were so ignorant themselves. As to the motions made by his right hon. Friend, he certainly should support them; but if he had a fault to find with them, it was that they did not extend far enough; he wished to see an inquiry

inquiry into every part of the naval system, into the treatment of the officers and men, into the situation and state of the ships, into the state of the dock yards, and into the want of stores and artificers; for of these last, he understood, there was a defalcation of 800 shipwrights less than the usual war establishments. This inquiry would either prove the negligence and incapacity of the Admiralty, or place their fame so high, as not to be touched by the breath of slander. Upon these heads, however, he should not enlarge, as they were extraneous to the motions before the House; not but he held papers on this subject, which might make the House start; they contained subjects which even in that House were too dreadful and too delicate to state publicly. But this he did not hesitate to affirm, and he begged the House to remember that he warned them of it, that if the present system was pursued, whoever might be at the Admiralty, if this system is not immediately changed, the most dreadful, the most fatal calamities that ever happened to this country might be expected.

Sir Edward Pellew stated to the House what fell within his knowledge of the naval defence of the country; and what was his opinion with respect to the efficiency of our present equipment. We had about 300 gun boats, or gun brigs, or cockle shells, as they had been termed; but which he deemed as competent to the business for which they were intended, or could be supposed capable of, as any other species of gun boats. We had kept the sea and blocked up the ports of the enemy all weathers, fair or foul; and they had nowhere a force that was able to cope with us. Yet these strong facts were not sufficient to satisfy the minds of some of the hon. Gentlemen as to the power of our navy. The contracting for building of ships for his Majesty's navy had been dwelt on with very great force in the course of the debate; he could state, however, from his own personal knowledge, that the contract work was, in the general, either composed of very indifferent materials, or else put together in a loose and slovenly manner, so much so that they could not be deemed sea worthy for any thing like the same space of time as the vessels which were built in the King's yards. Two particular instances had lately fallen within his own observation; indeed the result of his experience was, that ship building by contract is not to be depended on. But he had very lately seen two of them lying on the stocks, in such a state as was sufficient to convince him, if any further proof was wanting to his mind, of the impropriety of contracting.

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That mode, however, might be very necessarily resorted to, when there was not room enough in the King's yards, for the purpose of keeping up our number of shipping. As far as the subject could, in any degree, be connected with the character or conduct of the Admiralty Board, or with that of the noble Lord who presides over it, he must say, that he never knew any period during his experience in naval affairs at which more universal or more zealous affection towards the Government in general, or more cordial approbation of all the measures of the Admiralty, prevailed amongst all ranks of persons belonging to the navy; but every officer in the navy, he believed, was particularly satisfied with the conduct of the noble Lord at the head of that Board. The cordage, the stores, the provisions, in short every necessary for the proper appointment of a sufficient naval force to beat the enemy, was most rigidly attended to. We had not only enough, but more than enough to beat the enemy at Toulon, at Brest, at Boulogne, at Flushing, and at every other place where they were able to collect any force that was at all worth notice. This general satisfaction which prevailed among naval men as to the conduct of the Admiralty, and this strong and powerful force with which we were enabled to overcome the enemy, was still said to be insufficient. This reminded him of an anecdote of a French Admiral who was blocked up by him with six sail of the line;—the Frenchman had taken it into his head that there were twelve vessels at the mouth of his harbour, and though every pains was taken that could be likely to satisfy him as to the real amount of the blockading force, yet he never could be convinced that there were less than twelve vessels blocking him up. The case was not exactly similar; but really the idea of making it a subject of serious investigation, that we had not gun boats sufficient to meet the enemy, appeared to him something like forming a supposition that our ships of the line, frigates, &c. were not sufficient for the purpose of repelling any force that dare show itself to them.

Admiral Berkeley explained. He could not possibly suppose that our naval force was inadequate to the task of totally discomfiting the whole force of the enemy, if they came fairly out to them; but he meant to say that they never could possibly have collected in the force in which they now are, if we had had a sufficient number of gun boats to run in shore, and attack them in shoal water, where they frequently escaped

from our large vessels, on account of their drawing too much water to be able to pursue them in shore.

Mr. Wilberforce began by declaring that he had given way with pleasure to the three gallant officers who had preceded him. They were indeed eminently entitled to the attention of the House, not only from their professional knowledge and experience, but from the services also which they had rendered to their country. The House must, no doubt, be peculiarly desirous, as he himself was, of hearing the sentiments of Gentlemen of this description. Nevertheless he confessed, that when he first rose, it had been to vindicate his own claim as a Member of Parliament, (a claim which the right hon. Gentleman, Mr. Tierney, seemed to deny to all but professional men,) to form his opinion and deliver his sentiments on the important question which had been submitted to them by his right hon. Friend. Surely it was the duty of Parliament, and of every individual Member as a part of the whole, to keep a constant watch over all the public concerns of the country; and especially over the conduct of executive Government. And the naval department, as that in which our safety was especially involved, was peculiarly entitled to our attention. Indeed if naval men only were to discuss naval questions, the right hon. Member himself had scarcely been long enough in office to entitle him to take a share in the debate. But in truth the subject was one on which it behoved every man who was interested for the welfare of his country, to form and declare his opinion with seriousness and frankness; and he could not but condemn the levity of tone and manner, which pervaded the speech of the hon. Gentleman, ill suited as it appeared to him to the gravity of the question itself, and much more ill suited to the critical and serious situation of the country. But passing from the manner of the right hon. Gentleman's speech to its substance, Mr. Wilberforce could not think that he had urged any solid arguments against the motion of his right hon. Friend. What was that motion, and what were the grounds on which it was built? He hoped it was no improper deference to affirm, that it was entitled to the more consideration on account of the quarter from which it came. We were in a situation perilous beyond all former example in our history. France, after all her conquests, was threatening us with the whole undiverted force of her immense population. She was accumulating preparations for invasion on a scale

a scale of gigantic magnitude, along the whole of her extended coast. In these circumstances it was stated by his right hon. Friend, that from the best information he could obtain, our naval force, the particular classes of which he had distinctly specified, was much smaller than at former periods of far less serious alarm; that in particular we were deficient in that peculiar description of naval force which was particularly suited to the sort of attack we had reason to expect, and that at length, when its importance had been seen and an attempt had been made to supply this deficiency, it was in a degree utterly inadequate to the occasion, and with a slowness which, considering that we were told by Ministers that the attack might be at any time expected, was utterly unaccountable. On these points therefore, information was desired, that we might know whether adequate preparations had been made, adequate both in extent, in kind, and in promptitude against the threatened danger. Could it be denied that if the number of our ships of war of different kinds was smaller than at former periods, it was a circumstance which at least deserved the attention of Parliament and required the explanation of Government? Again, his right hon. Friend, looking forward to the possible protraction of the present war, or at least to the means of our future security, had been justly alarmed to find that we were utterly neglecting the means of increasing or even maintaining our navy, and therefore wished that the House should call for such information as would elucidate this most important point. Now what were the objections which had been urged against complying with the motions of his right hon. Friend? It had not been stated that information might be conveyed to the enemy. Indeed no distinct danger had even been alleged to be likely to result. First, the right hon. Gentleman had objected that assenting to these motions must infallibly lead to an inquiry into the conduct of the First Lord of the Admiralty. In the first place, granting that this were so, is it then to be opposed as a bar in the way of our proceeding in the discharge of a most important and necessary duty? For his own part, he was persuaded that an inquiry into the whole of our naval system might have some effects by no means unfavourable. Surely an inquiry of this sort might be carried on without disclosing to the public any thing which it was improper to divulge. Were there not such institutions as secret Committees familiar in the practice of the House? Surely our excellent Constitution had not left

us destitute of the means of executing our function of looking into the conduct of Government, without disclosing secrets, the publication of which might be injurious. Surely we were not reduced to the wretched alternative of suffering abuses to prevail because they could not be investigated and corrected without a mischievous exposure of them to our enemies and to the world. But let it be remembered the motion is not for an inquiry, but for information; and the concession which the right hon. Gentleman himself has made may well be turned against himself, that if he grants the information desired, there will appear such strong presumptive ground to suspect the Admiralty of negligence and supineness, that there is no course left for them, but to withhold the information altogether. This is surely to confess that there is at least a strong *prima facie* appearance of blame. Some of the papers were indeed to be granted, but what they were, he could not well collect from the language and still less from the argument of the hon. Gentleman. Surely if it was right at all to entertain the subject, it was right to investigate it thoroughly. If Government tells us the comparative numbers of some classes of our naval force at this and a former period, why not of all? Otherwise we shall have an imperfect, and therefore a false notion of our state and preparations. Again, if it be right to ascertain that our naval force is now sufficient, surely it is also right to examine in to the means that are used for maintaining it, and for bringing forward new ships as our old ones shall be worn out. But why, says the hon. Gentleman, bring forward this motion when such perfect satisfaction prevails throughout the country, and particularly among the whole naval service? On the latter point, Mr. Wilberforce declared that he must say the result of his experience was very different. It was for every man to form his judgment as well as he could, by availing himself of all the sources of information to which he could obtain access. He felt it his duty to declare, speaking with the same solemnity as if he were delivering his sentiments in a court of justice, that the naval men in general with whom he had conversed, condemned the system pursued by the present Board of Admiralty, and were highly dissatisfied with its general conduct. He could refer to an authority which he knew his hon. Friends below him would highly respect, an authority of high professional rank, of eminent knowledge, and long experience, by which he was warranted to affirm that our present preparations were by no means

means adequate to the present exigency, or such as they might easily have been made, or might even still be rendered. But why, said the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Tierney), all this work about three and twenty gun brigs, that Musketo fleet, as it had been termed by a gallant officer below him? How unfair a representation was this of his right hon. Friend's argument? Had he confined his attention to this particular class of force? He had indeed made it one object of his notice, as being that particular species of force which we were likely to want in our present circumstances, and which the Admiralty themselves had, by ordering them, admitted to be useful, though they were not by that order to be provided either in sufficient number or with the requisite dispatch. But while his right hon. Friend had thus shewn that this perhaps comparatively speaking less important part of our naval preparations did not escape his notice, he had yet attended, both for the present period and for future times, with proportionably greater earnestness to that more important part of our naval force, our ships of the line and frigates. But the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Tierney) seemed almost to resent altogether as an impertinent intrusion his right hon. Friend's bestowing a thought or saying a word upon our naval affairs. He would permit him to amuse himself with the volunteers; there he would even allow him some merit; but what had he to do with naval questions? But surely his right hon. Friend acted on this occasion in a manner worthy of his distinguished talents and his former character. He had indeed exerted himself to the utmost by his wisdom and experience to suggest, by his eloquence to enforce, and by his personal efforts also to carry into actual effect, such measures as might render the volunteers most efficient for the defence of their country. But while he was thus endeavouring to provide the means of defeating the enemy if he should effect a landing, he was not less vigilant in his endeavours to prevent that landing from being effected. While he endeavoured to render the land force adequate to its object, he did not forget that the naval service was justly the favourite service of this country, or neglect those better means of defence with which Providence had so amply provided us. This was to act with the circumspection as well as the patriotism of a real statesman. But this, Mr. Wilberforce said, naturally led him to comment on another part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech, wherein he had endeavoured to vindicate the Admiralty in having desisted from the usual practice of building ships of war in the merchants'

merchants' yards; and the hon. Member had even thrown out that the remarks his right hon. Friend had made on the subject, smelt of contraction. What was there, Mr. Wilberforce asked, in the temper, the character, the practice of his right hon. Friend, which could lead the hon. Member to suppose that he had been put forward to make his motion by some discontented contractor? He was persuaded the hon. Gentleman would retract an insinuation so little suited to the respectability of his own situation, or that of his right hon. Friend. But the subject itself was of the most serious importance. It had for many years been the established practice of the navy to build the greater part of our ships in the private yards, the King's yards being fully employed in repairing them. But it was said that the ships built in the merchants' yards were bad ones, a source of profusion and of jobs. On this he must ask, were not the bargains made by public competition? might not, and ought not the contractors to be bound under high penalties to furnish proper materials and good workmanship? A gallant Admiral had specified two bad ships which had been built in private yards. Could he not have mentioned also, if he had been willing, bad ships which had been built in the King's yards? It was in them, let it be remembered, that all the abuses had been stated to prevail, which the Admiralty claimed so much credit for correcting. But did Gentlemen bear in mind, that more than three fourths of all our ships of the line had been commonly built in private yards? The King's yards were necessarily more occupied in repairing ships during war than during peace, and might therefore be supposed likely to be able during peace to spare more of their force for building. Yet in the seven years of peace between 1783 and 1789, of which he happened to have an account, 29 sail of the line were built in the private yards, and only 8 in the King's yards. Surely, however, it might have been expected, that when the ancient established mode of maintaining the naval strength of the country was abandoned; when we were no longer to look to the merchants' yards, whence our chief supply had hitherto been obtained, that at least we should find some proportionably greater exertion in the King's yards to make up for that deficiency: but this was not even alleged. Nay, the matter assumed a far more serious shape, if the gallant Admiral opposite to him was correct in affirming, that of the usual complement of artificers in the King's yards, somewhat above 3,000, near 800 fewer hands than

than ordinary were now employed. Surely if this were so, the subject well deserved the attention of Parliament. It might seem much that the Admiralty had abandoned that system on which our navy had risen to the unexampled state of strength and glory, to which it had attained during the last war; but how much more did it call for inquiry when we found that no alternative was provided, no new source discovered, whence we might obtain that supply which was necessary, not merely for our honour but for our very existence? But the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Tierney) had urged it as an *argumentum ad hominem* against his right hon. Friend, and all other Members of that House who might object that the preparations made against the enemy were not sufficient, that they had acquiesced in the vote for 100,000 seamen, and had thereby precluded themselves from urging that more should be employed: but to this argument there were many obvious answers. If they had given the noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty 100,000 seamen, had they not given him as many as he asked? and if he had asked for more, for 120,000, 130,000, 140,000, 150,000, or 200,000 seamen, would they not have been readily voted? Besides, was it not always understood that in time of war the number of seamen actually employed, was not to be limited by the numbers which Parliament had voted? The Admiralty got as many as they could, and voted the number they expected to get. It was not within the province of private Members of Parliament to sit down to consider what number of seamen would be wanted for the public service; this was the special duty of the King's Ministers, who possessed means of information inaccessible to any but official men, and who were responsible for providing adequately for the public safety. It was their duty to see that a sufficient force was prepared, and it would be a poor excuse indeed if it should be found insufficient, to allege that the House of Commons had acquiesced in the estimates which the Government had laid before them. But the hon. Gentleman had represented it as an imputation on the character of the noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty, to entertain the present question. No man, Mr. W. said, felt more gratitude than himself for the professional services of the noble Lord: long might he repose on the laurels he had so honourably won! But they had no right to compliment away the safety of their country. To deal fairly with themselves, might not a man have been a distinguished naval commander, who might be not

not so well suited to the details of office, or what may be termed the civil business of the navy? Much more, might it not happen, that from impaired health or from other causes, a man the most justly distinguished at one period of his life for naval skill and gallantry, might not at another be fitted for the sedentary labours of a First Lord of the Admiralty? Let not the House of Commons be prevented from doing its duty by motives of delicacy, or even by feelings of gratitude which are in this case justly due. Let them remember that the constitution has invested them with the important office of watching over the conduct of Government, and of providing for the safety of their country. The papers now called for are necessary for enabling them to fulfil this important trust. If it appears, said Mr. W. that my right honourable Friend's suspicions are ill founded, if the papers when produced shall shew that, in the most perilous circumstances in which we were ever engaged, the Admiralty have provided a force adequate to the amount of the exigency, they will not only vindicate their characters from blame, but they will prove themselves entitled to the future confidence of their country. If it shall, on the contrary, appear that our naval force is inadequate, it is fit we should know it. Let us look our situation in the face. We must endeavour in that case to act upon the suggestion of the gallant Admiral below me (and no man more able than himself to act upon it with effect), and make our six ships do the work of twelve. We must double the efficiency of our force by our celerity and vigour in employing it. "But," says the hon. Member, "it has been usual to lay a ground for motions of this sort in some national loss or misfortune, and nothing of this sort is alleged as a justification of the present motion. Wait till then, and the motion will at least be made on stronger grounds." This mode of reasoning might possibly be admitted in common times; but let it be ever borne in mind that the danger against which we are now providing is of no ordinary sort. A blow is aimed at our very vitals. Surely to act upon the principle of the hon. Gentleman would be to play too deep a game. We contend for too high a stake, and we shall not, I trust, be such desperate gamblers, as thus to hazard all that is dear to ourselves and our posterity. If the enemy should effect a landing on our shores, I trust they will be met with that determined valour which has ever characterised the natives of this happy country; but let us remember that we owe it to our volunteers themselves, not to expose them needlessly to the

the perils and sufferings of such an arduous contest, if by sufficient naval preparations we can prevent the enemy from landing on our shores; we owe it therefore to ourselves, to our country, and to the world at large, to exert the utmost of our naval strength. It is for the purpose of calling forth and maintaining this strength in full measure and complete efficiency that the motion of my right hon. Friend is made, and it will therefore receive my warm support.

Mr. Sheridan—It was my intention, Sir, to wait until I should hear the opinions of professional men on this subject, but the observations which have been made by the hon. Member who has just sat down, urge me to obtrude myself on your notice thus prematurely, and contrary to my original intention. The hon. Gentleman has, in my mind, used observations the most unwarrantable on parliamentary grounds I have ever heard in this House. He has stated, that he has never had conversation with any naval officer whose opinion has not been decidedly in contradiction to the system upon which the naval affairs of the country have been for some time back conducted; that is to say, since the gallant Admiral, who now presides at the head of the Admiralty Board, was appointed to that high station; and this information so obtained, he offers to the House as a justification for the censure which the advocates for the motion before the House would attach to the character of the noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty. The hon. Gentleman ventures to tell the House, that upon grounds such as these, there is a sufficient reason for the inquiry, and for granting the papers required; but from whom has the hon. Gentleman obtained the intelligence, and heard the sentiments to which he thinks the House ought to attach so much importance? From officers, no doubt, who are ashore and unemployed; from those who have not the best opportunity of judging, and whose judgment for many reasons is not entitled to the first attention: but not from such officers as those whom the House has heard this night; not from such as the gallant Admiral who preceded the hon. Gentleman to whom I am now alluding, and who has attracted my notice by statements which I am inclined to think he has collected from persons such as I have described, from those whose accounts of the condition of the navy naturally receive a colouring from their own situation. Thus the hon. Gentleman would persuade us to found our verdict on an occasion so important as that now before us, upon evidence drawn from such sources, upon second-hand assertions,

in a word upon mere hearsay. The honourable Gentleman is no doubt a conscientious man, he certainly so considers and describes himself, and we cannot give him any credit at all if we do not believe him to be so; and I would appeal to his conscientiousness whether he does think that any court of justice, and this House is now called upon to act in that capacity, would pronounce sentence in any case upon evidence of the nature of that upon which he seems to rely? I say that there is no court that would attend to, much less believe such assertions. If the hon. Gentleman has any charge to urge against the noble Lord against whom the motion before the House appears to be pointed, I say, let the evidence be brought forward; but don't let accusations be insinuated or sent abroad, unsupported by any witnesses whatever, unjustified by any fact, and excused only by a loose statement that such and such officers, whom no one ventures to name, are much in the habit of speaking ill of the conduct of the Admiralty, and of the character of its principal director. The hon. Gentleman, however, has told us, that he entertains a very sincere respect for this noble Lord; and really here I must remark, that I never heard of any public character for whom men are more forward to profess respect, nor one that is so much respected, and yet so much aspersed. The grounds of the respect are, however, notorious, while those of the aspersion are not even pretended to rest upon any thing more than hearsay evidence, which is surely not sufficient to induce this House to acquiesce in a motion that has no other object in view, than to convey an imputation upon one of the most gallant and meritorious characters this country has ever produced. For such a purpose I will never give my vote. I will not therefore consent to the grant of a single slip of paper, however plausible the pretence for demanding it, that may lead to an inquiry for which there exists no necessity whatever; to enter into which would imply a suspicion for which there is not the shadow of excuse, and import an accusation for which there is not the slightest ground. I would ask the right hon. Mover of this proposition, what are the reasons, for he certainly has not stated any, which have provoked him to alter his sentiments with respect to the noble Lord who was the subject of such warm panegyric, upon the first accession of the present Ministers to office? and who, I would be curious to know, does the right hon. Gentleman think more adequate to the high station he fills; whom would he recommend to succeed him? If the right hon. Gentleman

tleman did pronounce the splendid panegyric to which I have alluded upon this noble Lord, upon light grounds, he was certainly very censurable, for he was, as it were, giving a false character, and that of a great public servant; but it was well known that those grounds were not light—they rested upon the highest public services, and were supported by the warm and unanimous applauses of the country. Why then has the right hon. Gentleman, and the hon. Gentleman who spoke last, changed their opinions? Why have they altered their sentiments of the noble Lord? Has any thing occurred since to induce or justify the change? I challenge them to take the most minute retrospect of the conduct of that noble Lord since his appointment to the presidency of the Admiralty: I call upon them to retrace all his steps, and to point out one reason why he has forfeited their confidence; I mean such a reason as this House would recognise as sufficient to justify the proposed inquiry. What facts have they in their power to produce? I am satisfied they have none, and therefore I will resist the proposition; and this is the first instance in which it has happened that I have felt it my duty to oppose a motion for inquiry. Indeed, on every such motion heretofore that I recollect, particularly during the administration of the right hon. Gentleman by whom the present motion was submitted to the House, ample grounds were laid to demand inquiry; but in this instance I am of opinion that the demand is unsupported, not merely by common sense, but common decency. I do not intend to attribute improper motives to the right hon. Mover; but I beg to ask him, what good can he accomplish by the production of papers respecting the state of our navy in a former war? What are his views? Does he mean to institute a comparison between Lord St. Vincent and Lord Spencer; to ascertain which of the two is better qualified to manage our naval concerns? I cannot see the purpose of such a contrast. It cannot tend to any good object. Indeed I am confident that if a stranger were to observe the whole of this proceeding, he would not hesitate to pronounce that it could be only actuated by factious and party motives. This I am the more strongly inclined to believe from the statements of the gallant officer (Sir Edward Pellew), which were quite a satisfactory reply to all the arguments that have been advanced this evening, and a full refutation of the calumnies that have been for some time back propagated relative to the condition of our navy. In that speech, which applied as forcibly to the heart

as the understanding, the hon. Baronet manifested not only that sincerity and frankness which is the general characteristic of the profession of which he forms so bright an ornament, and which never fails to interest any man capable of feeling, but also a considerable share of acuteness and judgment: he made some very pertinent remarks upon the nature of those gun-boats which seem to be such favourites of the right honourable Gentleman who brought forward this motion, but of which the hon. Baronet don't appear at all to approve; and, from my own observation, I certainly am disposed to agree with that hon. Baronet, who is much more competent to judge upon the subject than the right hon. Gentleman or any other statesman. I am not surprised that these gun-boats should be treated with so much contempt by naval men. I have happened to see something of them myself, by accident, in the course of the last war, on the South coast, and they really appeared to me to be quite unfit to render any material service in the way of attack or defence; indeed some of them were incapable of firing a shot. It is known that out of the 120 gun-boats which the right hon. Gentleman had in commission at the close of the last war, there were scarcely any retained as at all useful, and that 62 of them, which were purchased from contractors, were much the worst. Enough has been said by the hon. Baronet of the kind of vessels which contractors generally built: and without referring to the ships of the line, of which the honourable Baronet has taken notice, in proof of the badness of their materials and the inferiority of their workmanship, I shall only remark on these gun-boats. I do not, indeed, like to dwell on the misconduct of inferior officers in any department. I do not wish to hear of such persons in this House; we should always look to the heads of those departments as the persons answerable to us. The Navy Board may be suspected of having played into the hands of the contractors during the last war; and perhaps, to that was owing the great inferiority of the right hon. Gentleman's gun-boats—an inferiority which was certainly very glaring, for out of the 120, 87 were sold, after advertisement, for almost nothing; some which could not be disposed of were retained, and six were sent to Jersey, which were found so utterly useless, that Captain D'Auvergne knew not what to do with them. He, however, sent five of them home some time after, and was obliged to send some of his best cruisers to tow them safely. Yet this is the kind of force which the right hon. Gentleman would recommend

recommend in preference to any other to defend our coast. It reminds me of an anecdote of the right hon. Gentleman's Administration, when three men of war were sent to this country from Portugal, which was our ally; those ships were found to be incapable of giving us any assistance, but, on the contrary, were so little sea-worthy, that it was determined to send them home, and it became absolutely necessary to dispatch one of our frigates with them as a convoy. Such shipping would of course be rather an incumbrance to us; and the gun boats, to which the right hon. Gentleman is so partial, would, from all that I have heard abroad, which is corroborated by the hon. Baronet this night, be rather injurious on the score of expence, and the number of men they would necessarily require, than likely to be serviceable.—An hon. Admiral on the lower bench (Admiral Berkeley) has, in the course of a very extraordinary speech, stated that he had delivered in a plan to the Admiralty, which, if acted upon, must effectually secure our own coast, and completely destroy the flotilla of the enemy. The gallant Admiral has detailed to the House some parts of this plan; but he has not told us whether it was the production of his own brain or that of some other person, and doubtless it would be, from the specimen he has given us, a strong proof of his own gallantry to own it (*a laugh*). Without pretending to much nautical knowledge, one might, I think, question the correctness of the hon. Admiral's ideas upon this project, for the practicability of making use of gun boats to annoy the flotillas on the French coast is denied by every intelligent naval officer; but whatever is their use in the shoals along that coast, they surely are incapable of any degree of utility, comparable to that which may be derived from large shipping upon our own coast. Wherever the latter can be employed, the former must be comparatively useless. It is notorious that, all along from Pevernsey to Dungeness, a man of war can anchor close in shore, such is the depth of water. This, therefore, is the description of force upon which I would place my confidence either for attack or defence. As to the former, who can entertain a doubt that, if the French gun boats should venture out, and the slightest breeze should arise, that Captain Markham, whom I mention not as a Member of Parliament, for that I know would be irregular, but as a naval officer, that Sir Edward Pellew, Sir Thomas Trowbridge, or in fact any officer known in our naval records, would, with a single 74, shoot through and sink a crowd of that contemptible

contemptible craft? With respect to the number of seamen and marines now employed, it has been stated by the right hon. Gentleman on the Treasury bench, that there are 98,000, which is only 2000 short of the whole amount voted. But the honourable Gentleman who spoke last is still dissatisfied. He says that there ought to be more men. He does not seem to recollect that the vote of the House limited the Admiralty; and that it was at the time that vote was made the hon. Gentleman's objections would have been most timely and proper. That was the period to consider the amount of the force necessary to maintain the war. The Admiralty had thought 100,000 men sufficient, and it appeared that they were right notwithstanding the hon. Gentleman's disapprobation. They had, and it was not the least of their merit, collected this vast force in the space of twelve months, notwithstanding the number of our other descriptions of force, and without interrupting the active employment of our population in the various avocations of commerce, manufactures, and agriculture. To the observations of the right honourable Gentleman, on the propriety of building ships in the merchants' dock yards, I trust enough has been said by the hon. Baronet (Sir Edward Pellew), at whose presence this night the House has reason to rejoice, to convince the right hon. Gentleman of his error, and also to shew him that his partiality to gun boats is not quite so judicious as he imagined. After what the hon. Baronet has urged on this point, I should hope the right hon. Gentleman will no longer attempt to maintain his argument, unless he be influenced by such magnanimity that he would not wish to oppose the French gun boats by any but their own matches. (*A laugh.*) I have heard a right hon. Gentleman on the lower bench (Mr. Windham) often deplore that "the age of chivalry was gone;" but surely that complaint can no longer be repeated if the right hon. Mover of the proposition before the House shall continue to manifest a wish rather to oppose gun boats to those of the French, than to see a crowd of them run down by an English 74. This would be something like the feeling which I am sure would influence the right hon. Gentleman on the lower bench, if, in passing through the street, he should happen to see two men engaged of unequal size and strength. The right honourable Gentleman would immediately interest himself for the weaker party, and call into action that science for which he is so distinguished, to release, and perhaps to avenge, him. (*A laugh.*) To be serious :

serious: it is absurd to say, that we should at once give up that formidable description of naval force, in which we have always found our strength and our glory, and take up another which is condemned not merely by the experience to which I have already referred, but by the judgment of the most respectable naval officers. That this change too should be chosen, as the right hon. Gentleman recommended, merely in order to reduce us to a level with the French boats; for no other argument to support the choice has been advanced, really surprises me. It is something like this, that if we had a stone wall to defend us against the shot of an enemy, it should be recommended to us to throw down the wall and sling stones at our assailants. An anecdote has been very generally mentioned with respect to the right hon. Gentleman who commenced this debate: it is said that he proposed this sentiment—"The volunteers, and a speedy meeting with the enemy on our own shores." This toast, I understand, was proposed among a number of volunteer officers above six months ago, at a time when the volunteers, upon whom we are so much to rely for our security, could not be much acquainted with discipline, if, according to the right hon. Gentleman's assertion, they are even now very defective in that respect. I am as ready as any man to pay a just compliment to the right hon. Gentleman's active endeavours to promote the improvement of the volunteers. I acknowledge that his solicitude for their advancement and glory is considerable, and probably he wishes to remove any impediment in their way. His desire is, perhaps, that they should have a full opportunity of distinguishing themselves pursuant to the toast I have quoted. If such be his view, he certainly could not accomplish it by better means than by contriving to have the defence of our country committed to his favourite gun boats, instead of men of war. Independently of the other objections I have offered to those gun boats, there is one which occurs to me of too much strength to be omitted. If they were of the same kind as those of last war, any description of men would be good enough, or too good, for them; and if good men were required for them, they could not be had without deducting from the number necessary for our important shipping. Why, then, join with the corrupt band of detected speculators in censuring the Admiralty for not paying all the attention which the right hon. Gentleman desired to these gun boats? A little consideration ought to be sufficient to prevent any man from complaining of that respectable Board;—that Board
which

which is respectable in the estimation of all men but mistaken partisans or fraudulent contractors;—that Board which has had such numerous difficulties to encounter, all incurred by a solicitude to expose and punish fraud—to recover and to spare the public money. Has the right hon. Gentleman read the five reports from the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the abuses committed in the several branches of the naval department? If so, has he not there seen the foul corruption, the abominable artifice, with which the Admiralty has had to struggle? Has the right hon. Gentleman observed the frauds exposed in the second report—the ‘block and coopers’ contracts, where 2000*l.* have been paid for work proved not to be worth 200*l.*? Has he read the description of the plunder practised on seamen by prize agents; and if so, can he, can any man who loves the friends of his country and virtue, refuse his gratitude and admiration to the First Lord of the Admiralty who originated this inquiry? an inquiry which has irritated against him a host of enemies; they are enemies, however, which that noble Lord must despise. It was but the prejudice of defeated vice against triumphant virtue. It could not disturb the noble Lord’s mind. While he was only assailed by those worms who had fed and fattened upon the corruption of the navy—while he had only to reckon as his foes those who had proved themselves hostile to honour and justice, who had enriched themselves on the spoils of their country—while such only were his enemies, the noble Lord would proceed in his course of glory as he did in the victory on the memorable 14th of February 1797, disdaining and declining to retaliate their attack; but when the right hon. Author of the motion before the House becomes his assailant, the noble Lord must feel surprised. Even that right hon. Gentleman, however, cannot injure him. His fame stands too high—his character is too firmly established to be hurt by the assertions of any Member, and I have no doubt that the noble Lord will be ever found entitled to the applause and protection of his country.—With regard to the right hon. Gentleman’s recommendation, that shipping should be built in the merchants’ dock yards, I shall only refer him to the ships mentioned by the honourable Baronet, and also to the cases described in the reports of the Commissioners of Naval Inquiry, particularly to the cases where it appeared that the persons who received payment for the ships built in merchants’ yards, were clerks in the King’s dock yards. Is it possible to suppose that collusions did

did not exist in such cases as these? The right honourable Gentleman has said that it is impossible during war to build any number of ships in the King's dock yards, and that therefore a necessity arises of resorting to the merchants' yards. What a melancholy expression—that in those yards, where there were 3200 men employed, nothing more than the mere repair of ships could be done! If so, then our surprise must be diminished, that a French fleet should have been permitted, in the course of the last war, to find its way to Egypt, and another French fleet to sail to Ireland, where nothing but the elements offered to prevent a formidable French army from landing. If, however, the King's dock yards are really so little useful, or rather so useless, they ought to be abolished altogether. A new system ought to be adopted. If they could only finish in these yards 24 sail of the line, 15 frigates, and some few sloops, in the course of 20 years, although it is known that 45 shipwrights can build a 74 in one year—as there are 3200 shipwrights in those yards, and the expence, &c. could not be less in 20 years than 4,100,000*l.* a sum equal to the building of the whole navy of England, it follows, of course, that it is bad policy to continue the maintenance of these dock yards. It is besides well known that the internal system of these yards is bad. There is no difference in the wages allowed to the workmen; the unskilful can earn as much as those of a different description. Thus emulation is prevented, and many advantages, of course, lost to the employers. The right hon Gentleman may answer this, and say, that, although so many abuses have been detected by the Commissioners of Naval Inquiry, still the system of the dock yards is good: but I assert, and am prepared to maintain the assertion, that abuse pervades every department of the system. Does the right hon. Gentleman know of the frauds which the Commissioners have found to have been committed in every article with which these yards are furnished, particularly blocks? From these abuses arise the necessity of advertising for contractors to build shipping; and as to correct them, to produce integrity and arrangement in all the departments of the navy, is and has been the great endeavour of the high character upon whom it appears to be the object of the motion before the House to fix an imputation, I shall vote against it with as much satisfaction as ever I gave a vote since I had the honour of a seat in this House; fully convinced that such a motion is only calculated to gratify the corrupt, to frown upon reform, and to assail the reputation of a gallant officer, whose claims to the gratitude

of the country can only be equalled by the esteem and attachment he enjoys among all that are great and good.

Mr. Fox spoke in substance as follows:—I feel myself placed in a situation somewhat extraordinary on this occasion. With a great part of what has been said on the merits of the First Lord of the Admiralty, I am strongly disposed to concur, but at the same time, I cannot see how these arguments tended to the conclusion at which they arrived. My hon. Friend near me (*Mr. Sheridan*) has made, as he always does, a speech of the utmost brilliancy and eloquence, in which, however, he seemed to me to have almost entirely omitted the reasons on which he was to negative the motion, and he contented himself with announcing the vote he was prepared to give. Though ready to give my ready assent to the distinguished worth and pre-eminent services of *Earl St. Vincent*, I feel that the best way I can testify my respect for such a character, is to give my vote for the motion. I feel that a slur thrown on the reputation of *Earl St. Vincent* would be a loss to the country, and to remove every suspicion of that kind, I say, let there be ample means of inquiry afforded, so that the triumph of *Lord St. Vincent* may be the more complete, satisfactory, and glorious. It appears to me that the defenders of *Lord St. Vincent* had but two courses which they could with propriety pursue, either to say that no case whatever had been made out, and then refuse all the papers asked, or to produce all the papers which could reasonably be asked for, and upon the consideration of those to call for the censure or the acquittal of the House. But the line of conduct which Ministers have thought fit to take, does neither the one nor the other. By granting some papers and refusing others, they admit enough to countenance the suspicion of something wrong in the Naval Administration, and do not go far enough to let that suspicion be wiped away. But the course which Ministers have thought fit to adopt, it is not difficult to explain. They wish to defend *Lord St. Vincent* as they would have defended themselves; they wish to put him on a level with them, to obtain the precedent of his great name to resist inquiry, so that every other inquiry may be frustrated; they wish to put him on a level with *Lord Hardwicke*, so that the refusal of inquiry in the instance of one that can bear it, may be an argument for setting inquiry aside when it might tend to produce discoveries they would suppress. The right hon. Gentleman (*Mr. Tierney*) who spoke first against the motion, agrees that the papers alluded to in two of the motions shall be granted; but he is of opinion that the

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third cannot be granted. If, however, to ask for any papers at all be to cast some slur on the First Lord of the Admiralty, why are any papers granted at all? or is it because those which are refused might lead to inquiry, that they are withheld? If this be the object of the defenders of Lord St. Vincent, I am confident that he must disclaim such a mode of proceeding. I am confident that he would countenance no shuffling or evasion to suppress inquiry; and that he would not be content if he thought that it could be suspected he was adverse to have his administration canvassed. Thus Ministers, knowing that the conduct of the First Lord of the Admiralty is in every respect a contrast to their own, wish to make common cause with him, in offering a mode of defence to which, on a future occasion, they themselves may resort. Towards Lord St. Vincent I feel much personal friendship, and this renders me anxious that his reputation should stand high; but public motives give me a still greater interest in his fame and honour. Of his glorious achievement on the 14th of February no man can think higher than I do; but his conflict with the abuses and corruptions of his department appears to be, though less brilliant, not less arduous and meritorious. On the 14th of February he engaged and vanquished the enemy; but he has waged a war no less difficult, with jobs, and contracts, and frauds. He has broken their embattled line, no less arduous than to penetrate that of the enemy. My admiration of him is increased to find him possess in so high a degree, that which is more rare than gallantry in the field,—civil courage and decision as well as personal courage. I feel that his virtues and public deserts in this contest with corruption have naturally led to that obloquy by which he has been pursued. The attempt to put to rout the hosts of corruption must have created him enemies. Such may have been the persons from whom an honourable Gentleman opposite (Mr. Wilberforce) obtained the information he mentioned; but let the miserable witnesses be brought forward, that their testimony may be examined and disproved. This calls to my mind an anecdote of a risible nature;—It happened that when Justice Willes, a man who to many eminent qualities added a considerable portion of humour, was one day employed in trying a cause, I believe of murder, and one of the witnesses deposed that a ghost had said so and so:—"O very well (said the Judge), I have no objection to the evidence of a ghost; let him be brought in and sworn!" So, provided the witnesses alluded to by the honourable Gentleman can be brought forward, I have no objection to receive

ceive their evidence at the bar of the House, that we may afterwards decide upon it.—During the whole course of the debate, the only person who has made any direct charge against the conduct of the Admiralty in general is my honourable and gallant Relation (Admiral Berkeley), who spoke lately. As to the right honourable Gentleman who made the motions, I confess he seems to me to have made out little or no case. With respect to the number of gun boats in employment now and at former periods, the comparison affords no conclusion, unless it be shewn likewise that the exigency of the case was such, as to demand greater exertions and a greater proportion of this species of force. Unless too it can be shewn, that of gun brigs a greater number ought to be employed, the late period at which the Admiralty made the contracts for such vessels proves nothing. The right hon. Gentleman likewise proposes to address the Crown, recommending greater exertions in this way; but any measures for the improvement of our defence must be left to those who are in official situations. But in viewing our state of defence, the great mind of the right hon. Gentleman must see that it must be judged of upon a general system, and not upon any particular point. It is impossible but that, in viewing each point separately, there must appear to be some deficiency. It is evident, however, that some inferior parts must be overlooked, in order that the perfection of the whole may be obtained; and I am inclined to think, that if there be any part of our defence which it was more safe to sacrifice than another from its being of inferior moment, it is that for which the right hon. Gentleman has argued. Had the motion been for papers generally, I might have been a little puzzled to know how I should vote, though I believe I still should have voted for inquiry; but as the matter stands now I cannot hesitate. If the papers are refused, it must infer some slur upon the First Lord of the Admiralty; if some of these documents are withheld, it may be said by the right hon. Gentleman, that he was prevented from carrying the question he meant to move, because inquiry was suppressed, and he was denied the papers by which his case was to be proved. But it is said, that if all the papers were granted, a suspicion would lie against the First Lord of the Admiralty. But how long could such a suspicion continue? No longer, surely, than till the inquiry took place. But if any suspicion arises from the motion or from the papers produced, it is impossible to say how long suspicion may remain, since no inquiry is allowed by which it can be

be removed. Ministers profess themselves friends of Lord St. Vincent in the present instance; but how have they shewn themselves solicitous about the same and the accommodation of that noble Lord on other occasions? Do we not know that, for at least eighteen months, a difference of the most serious kind, and to the impediment of public business, existed between the First Lord and the Secretary of the Admiralty; yet that Secretary preserved his place for a year and a half, under those very Ministers who lately contended, that on account of a coolness between the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and the Commander in Chief there, it was impossible that the latter could, consistently with the public safety, remain in his place a week. I cannot help thinking therefore, the defence now set up by Ministers, as rather intended to be a convenient protection to themselves for the future, than as any thing which Lord St. Vincent's case would require. If Lord St. Vincent's conduct, which would stand inquiry, is to be opposed to any inquiry, then will others avail themselves of the example, to contend that they too, though they declined investigation, were equally conscious of rectitude and merit. And is this the way to do honour to Lord St. Vincent's character and superiority? Indeed, that Ministers look more to the benefit of the example than to the credit of the First Lord of the Admiralty, appears to me from the manner in which the motion had been opposed. It seems as if it were said, we will grant such papers as do not inculcate the First Lord of the Admiralty, and do not lead to inquiry. Why then are others refused? Will it not be said, that they would have inculcated the Admiralty and led to inquiry? And this is the way in which Lord St. Vincent's reputation is to be defended by his colleagues. The same right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Tierney), to whose defence of the Admiralty I have just alluded, says too, that there is no complaint against the Admiralty out of doors; and also that the public were equally content with the whole conduct of the present Ministers. As to the general character of Ministers with the public I shall give no testimony; but if the conduct of Ministers were to be the subject of discussion, and decided by argument, it would not be difficult to shew what the public ought to think of them. This suffer me to illustrate by a good humoured comparison, which on general principles often affords the best illustration.—In one of Moliere's plays, a grave old gentleman marries a young wife, or does something or other not very suitable to his character. Every body, however,

ever, is mightily content with what he had done, except that when it is mentioned every one bursts out a laughing. In the same manner, though it happens that every body is so well content with the present Ministers, yet when their merits are spoken of, it generally produces a laugh, or at least a smile, on every countenance. Different indeed is Lord St. Vincent in this respect from all his colleagues; and knowing that he is in every respect a perfect contrast to them in merit and reputation, they wish to bring him down to their level, or at least to shelter themselves under his great authority. But in order to strengthen the public confidence in Lord St. Vincent, let the administration of the Admiralty be examined, and the services of that noble Lord will appear even more important than they have yet been estimated. In voting for this motion on these grounds, I am conscious that I do that which private friendship and public duty equally prescribe.

The *Cancellor of the Exchequer* said, that he did not rise to add much to the strong and convincing arguments which had been so ably urged in defence of the measures of the Admiralty, but to make a few observations on what had fallen from the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down. Although the hon. Gentleman had said, that all or none of the papers moved for ought to be granted, the House, he trusted, would see the distinction, and they would be disposed rather to acknowledge the fairness of Administration that were ready to lay before the House every information that could be granted, consistently with the public safety. From every thing which he knew, from every thing which had been urged, he was satisfied that no ground had been laid for any inquiry; that no case had been made out which at all rendered it necessary that Lord St. Vincent should be put upon his defence. If, however, there could be any doubt in the minds of the public as to the deficiency of our naval defence, the papers that were to be produced would afford the fullest satisfaction. It was not difficult therefore to perceive the reason why some part of the papers were refused, while others were granted. As to the number of gun vessels contracted for, he conceived that it was a good reason for refusing those papers, as if granted, it would be necessary to go into an inquiry upon other points connected with it, from which might result much inconvenience and detriment to the public service. The same reason occurred for refusing those papers respecting the number of ships built in 1793 and subsequent periods, as it must branch into the same kind of details,

details, and call for the same kind of communication. In every point, therefore, to which papers are refused, it is where it would be inconvenient for the public service to grant it, and it is granted in every case where this restraint did not exist. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Fox) called himself the friend of Lord St. Vincent, and solicitous for his fame; but the hon. Gentleman had on former occasions professed himself the *not* friend of great men, and on these occasions he had always acted that part which the friends of those men did not support. When it was proposed to vote thanks to Lord Cornwallis, the hon. Gentleman opposed that vote, upon the ground that it was better for the reputation of that noble Lord that the vote of thanks should not pass. In the same manner, professing to be the friend of Lord St. Vincent, he scrupled not to expose that noble Lord to the suspicion of misadministration by supporting a motion for inquiry, for which he admitted that no ground had been laid. I confess however, (said the right hon. Gentleman), I intend to shew my respect and friendship for Lord St. Vincent by a conduct the reverse of that of the hon. Gentleman. With respect to the system of degrading our navy to the same level with the miserable species of naval force to which the enemy's want of means compelled them to resort, he agreed entirely with the hon. Baronet who spoke so ably. It surely would be strange, indeed, if with giants at our disposal we should employ pigmies; but whenever an inferior species of naval force was necessary, it would not be wanting. It had been already stated (by Sir Edward Pellew), that on the coast of France such was the nature of the shore, that no species of craft could prevent the enemy's boats creeping along. In addition to the powerful testimony of that officer, he could produce that of another naval officer (Captain Day) who had been employed by the Admiralty to examine and report his opinion as to the possibility of giving any effectual check to the communication of the enemy's gun boats along their own shores. That officer, in a letter to the Admiralty, states, that on account of the shallowness of the French coast, and the number of batteries on shore, it was impossible for us to send any species of vessels close enough to make any material impression on the enemy; and as the enemy had horse artillery continually moving along the shore, it was impossible even to send in boats for the purpose of annoying the squadrons of the enemy's flotillas. Such was the case as to annoying the enemy on their own shores; but in every situation where our smaller vessels could be of use to the protection of our own coasts, at every fit station

station and exposed point from the North Foreland to Portsmouth, there was scarce a point for the defence of which ample provision had not been made. It had been said, that there was a larger number of gun boats last war; but of the value of such vessels, he had a letter in his hand from an officer of merit (Lieutenant Topley), which would give the House some idea. That officer states in the letter (which Mr. A. read), that he was once commander of one of the Dutch vessels, which had been fitted out as a gun boat, and it was almost impossible to keep her from sinking. Twenty fine schooners had been fitted out with one 24 pounder, which did not answer, and they were armed with carronades. These vessels had commonly lain idle at Portsmouth, and were good for nothing but a parade on a fine day, so that if they should have ventured so far out as the Eddystone Lighthouse, they never would have returned to port had a top-gallant breeze arose. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, that of the gun brigs, a much better kind of vessel, orders had been given for building twenty-three of them; but the First Lord of the Admiralty, deeming it advisable to complete other vessels that were in hand, had ordered the sloops of war to be previously launched; and if more gun brigs were not in service, it certainly was because the First Lord of the Admiralty was of opinion that another and superior kind of force was preferable. It had been said, that the number of shipwrights in the yards was 800 deficient. The fact, however, was, that more men were now in the yards than during the first year of the last war, and only 58 less than during the highest year of the last war. It was to be considered, too, that as nearly 400 persons had been discharged who received 6s. a day for doing nothing, the number of efficient men now was greater than it had ever been. But it was unnecessary for him to go further into details which had been so much better handled. He agreed with the hon. Gentleman opposite, that it was, because Lord St. Vincent had shewn himself so inexorable a foe to abuses, because he had shewn himself determined to lay the axe to the root of the tree, that he had incurred so much obloquy. There were other great men engaged in the same arduous career, who had their share of that obloquy; but he was convinced that to this chiefly were complaints owing; and sometimes, perhaps, those men, from their habits of life not calculated to give grace to refusal, and to soften denial, might have excited the animosity of those whom it was impossible to gratify. The public indeed had a deep interest in the character of such men and of the First Lord of the Admiralty. No man was better qualified to serve the country

country than that noble Lord. Of him might be said, what had been said of Lord Chatham, that he had the name of an Englishman, respectable in every quarter of the globe.

— Clarum et venerabile nomen
Gentibus et nostris multum quod proceret urbi.

The House and the Country will then judge, who best consult the fame of Lord St. Vincent, on the present occasion; and if no ground of inquiry be laid, surely nothing could be more to be deprecated than at so critical a moment throwing suspicion on so important a branch of the public defence, and wasting the time and attention of the House upon unnecessary inquiries.

Mr. George Ponsonby was sorry to see an imputation brought against his hon. Friend below, that was of all others, he thought, the least likely to be brought. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman opposite, if he had preserved his friendship inviolate to the same degree as his hon. Friend (Mr. Fox), or if he in every instance had carried his friendship to the same extent? Had his good Friend by him tapped the right hon. Gentleman on the shoulder, and bid him look back, that right hon. Gentleman would have seen a quondam friend, for whom, perhaps, he had not preserved all the attachments nor all the sympathies of friendship. Why should any wish exist to conceal the naval situation of the country? The more our state is known, said the hon. Gentleman, the more respect will our naval force command. He could perceive no ground of delicacy on this question, when our naval superiority was so confessedly admitted even by our enemies. The more, in fact, our naval force is known the more we must be dreaded. Nor could such an investigation as that proposed by the motion, give greater information to the enemy than what they already possessed, which was, he conceived, an information of our superiority. He would ask the House what had been the conduct of the Admiralty in regard to the most vulnerable part of the empire? Was it not the most judicious in every respect? Every person would admit Ireland to be that part of the empire which he had described, and the conduct of the Admiralty in regard to Ireland was the most satisfactory, and appeared, he could say from good authority, to those that were most interested in that part of the empire, to be the best calculated for protection and security. What description of vessels did Ireland most require, or by what description of vessels had Ireland

been so much satisfied? It was by large vessels that the shores of Ireland had been protected, and not by the small craft, which seemed to be the object of some Gentlemen to recommend; and Ireland, at the same time, it would be admitted, was the weakest part of the empire, and therefore the best criterion by which we ought to judge from experience of the best means of our defence.—The hon. Gentleman was by no means anxious to go into comparisons, but at the same time no comparison he was certain could terminate in any way disadvantageous to the noble Lord now at the head of the Admiralty. A force, he remembered, had hovered over the coast of Ireland for upwards of 17 days, under a former Administration, with General Hoche at its head, which, had not the weather prevented it from landing, might have been attended with very serious consequences, and which, during those 17 days, was unmolested, or rather undiscovered, by any British fleet. Were comparisons to be made, and were he permitted to follow them up minutely, he believed they would terminate greatly in favour of the present Board of Admiralty in every respect; and feeling this with his hon. Friend below (Mr. Fox), he could see no rational objection to the inquiry proposed. Should such an inquiry produce any effect in regard to the enemy, it must be, that only of deterring him from his false and ill founded enterprises, it must be that only, from the present state of our navy, of convincing the enemy that successful invasion was impossible, and that the attempt must be attended with discomfiture to themselves. If any objection was entertained to the conduct of the noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty, it must be on account of the aversion he has discovered to every species of corruption, and his laudable determination to check and oppose it in every shape. On this account, therefore, he was glad to see that noble Lord so warmly supported by the Gentlemen opposite, and professedly upon the same principle, because from this circumstance it was natural to conclude, that there was no corruption existing in any of the other departments of Administration, or the noble Lord could not have been the only one singled out as an object of persecution in this respect. He must again repeat, that in regard to policy, there could be no objection. The more the enemy shall know, the more he will fear, and Lord St. Vincent will have an opportunity of vindicating more generally his conduct. For these reasons, the hon. Gentleman said, he would vote for the motion, not for an address to his Majesty to remove,

move the present First Lord of the Admiralty, but for an inquiry by which he would be enabled to justify his conduct.

Mr. Sturges Bourne said, that his right hon. Friend had moved for papers in order to enable Lord St. Vincent to clear his public character and conduct to the country, and yet Ministers had refused to accede to three of his right hon. Friend's motions, on the express ground, that if they were carried an inquiry must necessarily take place. Could it have been expected that any enemy of Lord St. Vincent would have said more? Because if the motions were agreed to, evidence must be called to the bar, to shew reasons why Lord St. Vincent had not done now what had been done on a former occasion. The right hon. Gentleman (*Mr. Tierney*) had accused his right hon. Friend (*Mr. Pitt*) of making statements which were dangerous to the interests of the country; but had not his right hon. Friend with respect to the militia, the army of reserve, and the volunteers, proved himself the sincere friend of his country, instead of saying any thing which might endanger her interests? With respect to the dock-yards, the right hon. Gentleman (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) had stated that the deficiency of artificers only amount to 58; he did not mean to dispute the information of the right hon. Gentleman, but he had been told that the deficiency amounted to 1100 below a war establishment. He should be highly satisfied if the statement of the right hon. Gentleman should prove to be correct, but the difference on this subject called for inquiry. He very much feared that at the period when the peace was made, the number of shipwrights and artificers in the dock yards were reduced 400 below a peace establishment, and this too at a time when a large number of ships were in want of repairs. Respecting the ships, he should like to know whether any new ships had been laid down, and whether the ships which had been laid down for years were now going on with. It had been said, in opposition to the proposal for building ships in merchants' yards, that an action had been brought against the builder of the *Ajax*, for not performing his contract, but that was surely no reason why ships should be built no where whatever. The motions of his hon. Friend did not go to the disposition of our force, but to comparative statements, which were necessary to the elucidation of the subject. Whether gun-brigs ought to be employed on the enemy's coast, or on our own, he would not pretend to decide, but that made no difference as to the amount of our force; and when the House were in

possession of information, it would be for them to decide whether our force had been properly applied or not. He agreed perfectly with respect to the ability of Lord St. Vincent as a commander, although he might disagree with respect to the conduct of that noble Lord in other departments. They had only now to consider acts of omission, but, perhaps at a future time they might have to consider acts of commission, and particularly relating to matters of essential importance, respecting the personal liberty of the subject. (*A loud cry of hear! hear!*)

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* explained as to the number of shipwrights, in which he conceived he had been mistaken by the hon. Gentleman. The number at the conclusion of the late war was 3372; the number at present, from the accounts up to the 1st of March of this year, is 3314; consequently it would be seen there was a deficiency of 58 only.

Mr. Sturges Bourne said, that he alluded to artificers in general, and probably the difference on this subject was the best refutation of the right hon. Gentleman's statement.

Sir Wm. Elford addressed the Speaker as follows: Sir, I thought it not improbable, as I on a former occasion stated to the House, that some of the motions brought forward by the right hon. Gentleman this day, might have afforded me an opportunity of representing certain facts relative to the conduct of the Admiralty, which now I have heard the motions read, I am aware I cannot do consistently with the rules of the House, and I must therefore take another opportunity of doing it; and I should not therefore at present have offered myself to your notice but for the purpose of making one or two short observations on what has fallen from some Gentlemen during the debate, and particularly from the right hon. Gentleman who first opposed this motion. I cannot express the degree of astonishment with which I heard that hon. Gentleman state, that out of doors no discontents whatever prevailed against the conduct of the Board of Admiralty; because, Sir, the converse of that assertion is so notoriously true, that I believe it will be difficult to meet with ten men who will deny it, and difficult to conceive who have been the hon. Gentleman's companions and informers. Sir, those discontents have arisen from the harshness and injustice with which numbers of persons holding civil offices under them, have been displaced from those situations on slight and frivolous pretences, and from the rashness, violence, and intemperance

ance with which numbers of honourable and respectable officers in the navy have been treated on various occasions. Sir, another observation of the right hon. Gentleman I must beg also to notice, not less extraordinary than the former, which is, that it is a species of presumption in the right hon. Gentleman near me, to put *his* knowledge in competition on professional subjects with the noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty, which he appears to do, when he suggests other modes of defence than those the noble Lord has had recourse to, or a greater extent of those than he has thought sufficient. Surely the hon. Gentleman does not mean to press this argument, as he does not see to what result it leads. Does he mean gravely to say, that on great political questions involving professional topics, no Member ought to give an opinion but those who are of the profession referred to? And does he not see that such a regulation would nearly put an extinguisher upon debate and discussion? But, Sir, supposing his argument good for any thing, has he forgotten that on the subject of the military defence of the country, some suggestions have been offered by the right hon. Gentleman which Government were glad to adopt? And yet those suggestions were offered before the zeal and activity that right hon. Gentleman has displayed in the county of Kent, had rendered him so much versed in military subjects as he now is. Does not the hon. Gentleman's memory also furnish him with some recollection of what passed during the discussion of the two great measures of the last session? I mean the defence and the finance bills; on which occasions various suggestions and amendments were offered by that right hon. Gentleman, which were at first received in the same contemptuous manner as that now produced; which were combated, argued, and determined against; which were again and again combated, and at last adopted—and does it not occur to the hon. Gentleman that something like that may again occur on the present occasion? Sir, another hon. Gentleman opposite to me, has given the House a high eulogium on the great character of the noble Earl at the head of the Admiralty, in which, as far as it relates to his naval exploits, no man ever has been or can be more inclined to accede than myself; but I am not therefore bound to give that mark of approbation to his civil administration, of which I think it wholly undeserving. It has been urged that the clamour against the Admiralty has been raised by those whose malpractices have been detected and punished, and the hon. Gentleman states, that

that the noble Lord had a more formidable phalanx of jobbers, contractors, &c. to oppose than even the Spanish line afforded. Sir, that there have been malpractices in the departments of the navy, as there have been in other departments, is, I fear, not to be doubted, and it is impossible not to applaud the noble Lord for his endeavours to abolish them. But, Sir, these evils have been rather studiously magnified, and slight and trivial offences most ostentatiously punished; and, Sir, when nothing will reconcile men's minds to a system of extraordinary severe punishment, but a thorough conviction that the source is pure and uncontaminated, and that those who inflict it are actuated only by a sincere love of justice—[The Speaker reminded Sir William that he was deviating from the question]—Sir, I feel that I am transgressing against those rules which I began by prescribing to myself, and I must take another opportunity of stating what I have to communicate to the House; at present I shall only add, that I give my hearty concurrence to the motion.

Mr. Tyrwhitt Jones—Sir, after having endeavoured to catch your eye once or twice, if it would not have borne the appearance of impatience, I should most certainly have interrupted the hon. Baronet (Sir Wm. Elford), in his lecture on *morality*, which, he being so completely out of order, you have so properly done. This motion, Sir, and its defence are both equally extraordinary; I do not know which surprises me most; but I must begin with the hon. Admiral (Berkeley). First, he says, "there has been no exertion on the part of the Admiralty." To that observation I say, look to the state of the marine, refer to the list of ships (in full force) as presented by my right hon. Friend (Mr. Tierney). Then the hon. Admiral says, if he has any fault to find with the motion it is "that it does not go far enough." But if it does not, the right hon. Mover says he has many more stronger ones in *petto*. But, Sir, what a proceeding this is! A motion for the production of papers by a Member who, while Minister for seventeen long years, refused all inquiry and all papers. I once did, after pretty strong perseverance and probing him to the quick, get a bundle from him; [This alluded to the papers on the famous El Arish treaty so often moved for by Mr. T. Jones,] and now he of all men in the world, comes forward to ask for documents without condescending to advance an argument himself (and the further his hon. Friends go the weaker their arguments become) to substantiate any thing like a claim to their production. The truth

truth is, the right hon. Gentleman has not a leg to stand upon. Indeed, Sir, it is quite marvellous how this proceeding stands. It is not my wish to fling ridicule on it more than it deserves, but that is almost impossible, and it has been suggested by an hon. Gentleman (Mr. Sheridan), that it must have been brought forward for a *bet*. Now, Sir, I think that cannot be the reason. It strikes me from the late proceedings of Gentlemen opposite, that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Pitt) is in the exact predicament of a celebrated female (Mrs. Lee), who has lately figured away with great notoriety. The right hon. Gentleman has had a *dream* like her. She dreamt of marble palaces, alabaster vases, &c. &c. *He of co-operation, coalitions, fraternal hugs, leaves and fibres, &c.* and at last, after some importunity, like her, he could stand it no longer, and has flung away the CAMPHIRE-BAG, and said welcome pleasure! welcome opposition! welcome co-operations! welcome coalitions! (*Here an incessant roar from the whole House.*) Above all, what a curious thing it is to see the panegyrist of Lord St. Vincent in 1801 become his accuser in 1804; in fact, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman seems to have assumed the character of public accuser. Furthermore, Sir, what foundation is there for this motion? Is there any petition on the subject on your table? Is there any thing like a murmur in the kingdom? Is there any the slightest proceeding to ground this motion upon? No, Sir, I will tell you on what it proceeds. I do not mean to charge the right hon. Member with connection, or correspondence, or any relative situation with contractors; but, Sir, the six naval reports have raised a clamour in which a representation or rather misrepresentation has been made to him which has prompted him to bring it forward, and on which he, I have no doubt, thinks himself justified. But the attack is the same, it is on the First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord St. Vincent, who deserves it not. He is one of the most meritorious men in England, and deserves such treatment the least, both on account of his great naval as well as civil services, and his grand attempt to remove most horrible abuses: and, Sir, while speaking particularly of him I shall take the liberty of saying as I think, that great credit is due to the Ministers generally. And now I challenge the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Pitt), I challenge his coadjutors, his co-operators, his coalitionists, *all*, to prove that his Majesty's Ministers have done what they ought not to have done, or left undone what they ought to have done (*a cry of hear! hear! from the Opposition*)

Opposite benches). Sir, I repeat it, and their only crime with Gentlemen opposite seems to be, that they are the constitutional Ministers of the country, or, as I call them, the *King's own*—(*here another cry of hear! hear! from the same quarter*)—but, Sir, I repeat this sentiment, they are the *King's* constitutional Ministers, and they moreover, I repeat it (notwithstanding insinuations to the contrary) enjoy the confidence of the *good people* of England. Look to the votes of this House, that is the sense of the kingdom, the united constitutional sense, deny it who can. Upon the whole, Sir, the advice I shall give the right hon. Gentleman is, that considering the bad foundation he has to go upon, and the very weak arguments of his supporters, he will get up and say (to save his own credit) that he is completely misinformed and mistaken as to the business, and beg leave to withdraw the motion.

Captain Markham rose, and began by saying, that it appeared necessary for him to clear up some mistakes or misrepresentations which originated in the course of the debate. The reason for having stated the number of seamen in the month of December last, in preference to any other month, was, that the regular returns had been made to the Admiralty at that period. There were then 76,054 seamen on board his Majesty's navy. Since the month of December no less than 6,441 had been added, and the return of marines was 15,679. All these added together made a total of 98,174 men. Those returns were to be found in the Admiralty, and had no connection with the Navy Office. There were no less than 19 sloops of war contracted for, and were to be built in the month of November last, and there were very sufficient reasons for gun boats having been ordered previous to the contractors completing the sloops. It was not from an idea that these would be immediately required, but in order to be in readiness for particular purposes. As to the sloops not having been built sooner than in three months, he could confidently state that no disadvantage would result from that circumstance. It would have been very injudicious to build them in a hurry, or of raw or green wood, which always proved leaky; and he did not imagine that Bonaparte's gun boats would be found, on trial, to answer his purpose for a similar reason. He would rather have Gentlemen be inclined to concealment, than to divulge any circumstances which might prove injurious to the country. It would be necessary, in the first place, to have on hand a great stock of timber,

timber, were ships to be built in merchants' yards. Those vessels which were built in the King's yards were more substantially built than others. He meant nothing personal against any individual, when he said, however, that in his opinion a proper use had never been made of shipwrights in this country. The ships built in the King's yards, were wholesome and sound for the men to live in; those built elsewhere, were generally found to get what is called the dry rot; they inclined the men to fevers, and were soon rendered unserviceable. He might even say, that those ships which were built in merchants' yards, had been the ruin of the navy! He did not know exactly what the hon. Admiral meant; by alluding to 19 sail being taken when under convoy; he was not aware of any such thing having ever happened. On the whole, in considering the nature of the present motions, he, for his part, must say, that personal motives were to be presumed. If the right hon. Gentleman, or any other person, had any fixed and determinate charge to bring forward against the noble Lord who had the direction of the naval department, he would wish rather that they should state their charges directly and openly against him, than go about it in the manner they seemed inclined to do.

Sir William Curtis expressed himself to be also at a loss to know what convoy the hon. Admiral had alluded to in the course of his speech; because he too might perhaps have had an unlucky hit among the number. He begged to know where the right hon. Gentleman would wish to place his gunboats, could a greater number be immediately procured. They were only fit for assembling to protect the coast, and he could venture to say, that merchants' vessels were never so well protected as at the present moment. In the year 1793, the number of vessels taken by the enemy was 418; in 1794, they were 484; in 1795, 493; and in 1796, there were no less than 793 vessels of various descriptions lost. He did not know what Gentlemen would wish to have, when we had at present fleets every where. For his part, after having heard the discussion which had taken place on this subject, he could venture to say, that he should that night repose upon his pillow with a greater degree of satisfaction than he could have done, had not the conduct of Lord St. Vincent been called in question by the present motion.

Mr. Courtenay said, it was highly gratifying to observe, that every one who had spoken of the noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty, had done so in terms that implied there could

could be no doubt what would be the termination of any inquiry that might be instituted. The present question had led to a discussion which convinced every Gentleman of the firm basis on which the security of the country reposed. As long as eloquence shall consist in correctness of judgment, simplicity and truth, it will be admitted that the gallant Admiral under the gallery (Sir Edward Pellew) had defended Lord St. Vincent with some of those rhetorical powers for which seamen are not always distinguished. He was one of those who considered, that of all others, a professional man was the most suited for the high station occupied by Lord St. Vincent; and he deemed it as absurd to place a person in different habits in that situation, as to advance a sailor or a soldier to the highest rank in the courts of British jurisprudence. On every ground, whether he regarded the character of the noble Lord or the public welfare, he considered the present motion fit to be supported.

Mr. Burroughs observed, that it was contended by many Gentlemen, that the character of the First Lord of the Admiralty was a sufficient answer to the inquiries which were the object of the present motion. Did Gentlemen mean to say, that the right hon. Gentleman, who had so long directed the councils of the state, had no character and no opinions which ought to be regarded? It was, perhaps, his own private sentiments, that the war of France is not against our navy, but against our finances; but if there be any neglect in the naval department, no doubt can be entertained but they will avail themselves of it. It is therefore of the highest importance, not only that the present force may be competent, but that it may be continued in a condition adequate to the complete defence of the country. On these grounds, he considered the production of every document which could give satisfaction on this subject, prudent and necessary.

Mr. Fonblanque, having stated that he was in general favourable to inquiry into the conduct of public departments, expressed his anxiety that the grounds of his opposing the motions then under discussion should be distinctly understood, and as he was aware of the impatience of the House to proceed to a division, he would be as short as possible in stating those grounds. The noble and gallant Earl at the head of the Admiralty, had so well earned the confidence of the country, that up to a certain period all parties were unanimous in his praise; but a question has now arisen, whether he

he had not lost in council a portion of that confidence. To meet this doubt, he thought that it was enough to prove that the naval force of the country was fully adequate to the exigence of the crisis formidable as it is; and in order to afford the House the means of judging, whether such was the state of actual naval preparation, certain papers had been moved for, to the production of which, his Majesty's Ministers had most readily consented. But other papers were moved for, the propriety of producing which, might be considered as at least doubtful, because no groundwork had been laid to shew their importance to any purpose of censure of the Board of Admiralty; for if the naval force of the country were sufficient to cope with the dangers which threatened it, whether constituted of this or that description of armed vessels, or whether such force was constructed in the royal yards, or by contract in the merchants' yards, were points of very little importance; but if from the papers agreed to be produced, instead of their proving an adequacy of force, the contrary should appear, it would then certainly be proper, and the duty of the House, to inquire what were the resources of the country, and why they had not been made fully available? Here the responsibility of the Admiralty would indeed attach, and unless the noble Earl could shew that the means of defence were adequate, he must, with all his claims upon his country's gratitude, submit to the consequences of that responsibility which the constitution attaches to his station; but until it appeared that the means of defence which he had provided were inadequate to the danger of the country, it were to suppose an insufficiency in the council and exertions of that noble and gallant Earl, which candour would not presume, and at which public gratitude would revolt. But the eulogies upon the claims of the noble Lord are almost general, and the motion is supported by some; upon the principle that the character of the noble Earl will acquire additional lustre if possible from the result of inquiry. The extreme refinements of friendship are not perceptible to common minds; and without hazarding an opinion upon this species of refinement which deprives established character of the privilege of repelling by its immediate influence trifling, vexatious, or malicious charges, it becomes material to consider how they who have voted for the measure of inquiry, upon the conviction that the result of such inquiry will be honourable to the party whose conduct is the subject of it, are to bring to that inquiry the dispassionate mind which is essential.

to a due result from it.—Mr. Pitt having by gesture manifested that he had not proposed inquiry, Mr. Fonblanque remarked that it was not his purpose to mistake, and he should be really happy to find that he had misunderstood the right hon. Gentleman; he would therefore state what he understood to be the ulterior purpose of the right hon. Gentleman; namely, to propose an address to his Majesty.—Mr. Pitt having here signified that such was his communication of purpose, Mr. Fonblanque remarked that he had not misunderstood the right hon. Gentleman, still less mistated him, for such an address must necessarily be preceded by inquiry. Mr. Fonblanque concluded by stating, that he conceived it to be the duty of Parliament to be assured that the national defence was equal to the national danger, and that if the resources of the country were neglected or misapplied, it was the duty of Parliament to interpose; but that previously to any inquiry into the conduct of any department immediately connected with the public security, it ought to appear that the public security was not adequately provided for, or the means of obtaining such information were withheld; and that though it should appear that the means of defence were adequate to the danger, if further means could be devised, or more efficient or less chargeable ones be substituted, that he considered it to be at once the right and duty of Members to suggest or propose them; but that as the result must be matter of choice, the circumstance of their not having been previously adopted could not be made a ground of censure.

Mr. Pitt—I should have expected that the observations of an hon. and learned Gentleman near me, would have been considered decisive as to the merits of the present question. We are called upon, say the Ministers, to refuse certain papers, because they will lead to inquiry. What is that but to say, that when full information is afforded, doubts must rest upon the minds of the Members of this House, which can alone be removed by serious investigation? These doubts must be felt on the most important subject; whether the naval force, in its present state, be competent to the national security; and if such preparations are making as will in future place it on a footing adequate to meet the growing exigencies for the public defence. But these documents, which they acknowledge would create this uncertainty, are not to be supplied, and Parliament is to be left in utter ignorance of these important matters, lest the people should suppose there is danger. This is not to claim confidence in Lord St. Vincent, it is to derogate from his reputation; for

to inquire they tell us is to mistrust. What sort of hope is it then, with which an hon. Baronet (Sir William Curtis) is inspired, which is to dispose him to retire to his pillow, after the debate of this night, in so much confidence and security? The long sleep of death seems alone capable of rendering us insensible to alarm under these representations. If that event should not tranquillize our feelings, we may survive only to witness the decay of our marine, the dissipation of our finances, the surrender of the fortunes, the honour and the glory of the country. But let it not be said I am trifling with the feelings of the House by these melancholy views. I believe, with a fit application of the resources, the country may not only be rendered secure, but triumphant; but with the species of false confidence, of delusion, which is attempted to be supported, I know not what fatal catastrophe may be the result. I have been very much astonished at the extraordinary turn this debate has taken. Ministers had previously applied to be informed of the nature of the motions I meant to propose. I informed them, and I certainly understood it was their intention to accede to two of the motions, without any objections being suggested. With this persuasion, as I have lately often intruded very much on the time, and I fear the patience of the House, I thought it unnecessary to enlarge on the nature, circumstances, and object of the motion. Consistently with this reflection, I merely stated the leading object, from doing which, I had no sooner retired, than the right hon. Gentleman below me rises and asserts, that I have made out no case on which the present application can be founded. I must confess this is not treating me with that candour I had reason to expect. A case opened, and a case proved, are two very different things; but it is not at least a necessary consequence that these two stages in the same cause should not succeed each other. I should be very much surprised if the case, even as it now stands, should, by any Gentleman, be considered feeble. The first prominent feature of it is, to possess such a naval force, under the present danger of invasion, as would be fully competent to guard these islands. I say the force ought to be greater; that it is less than it ought to be, and that it might, if the means of the country were put in requisition and activity. Are not these, then, grave and important considerations; and are they not directed to provide against the greatest possible calamity, and for the security, nay, the existence of the country? The next distinguishing feature of the present motion, is to lay a sufficient foundation to keep

keep the navy under such an establishment, that whatever may be its present condition, a permanent force may be in future supported, adequate to the accumulating perils to which the nation may be exposed. These preparations are the more necessary, because the present war succeeds a recent one of great length, in which the naval force had unavoidably received considerable damage. Can I, consistently with the respect I owe to this House, inquire if these matters, which immediately concern the present safety and future strength of the country, are subjects of importance? or if any materials can be supplied on which a case may be more firmly supported? The hon. Gentleman below me (Mr. Tierney) has refused the main object of this motion, and he is to be a powerful supporter of the present measures. Whether his aptitude be as great in the support of an Administration, as it is in opposition, we have to learn—we have yet to learn what his abilities are as a defender. I have been instructed already in a severe school, but I very much question if he has distinguished himself, or will do so under the new character he has been induced to assume; and he certainly has enjoyed sufficient opportunity to remove our uncertainty in this particular, of which, however, he has not been disposed to avail himself. I am told by the hon. Gentleman, I have been seized with a panic to which the gallant heart of the noble Lord could not be liable. Am I to understand that the right hon. Gentleman speaks the sentiments of his neighbours on the same bench, when he affects to ridicule this panic as idle and absurd? I know that the noble Lord alluded to is above all ignoble fear; but he would be wholly unfit for the station he occupies, if he were not to entertain a rational conviction of danger; if he did not know that difficulties were to be encountered under the mighty system of hostility adopted by France. If Ministers have felt none of these apprehensions; if to this alarm or panic they have been wholly superior, how are we to explain their recent conduct? For what purpose have they been engaging the time of Parliament, with prolix and energetic discussions on the military force, necessary to defend the sacred soil of our country from insult and violation? Whence, if this be the case, all this bustle and activity, this voluminous correspondence with the most eminent characters in military life; and whence this variety of measures, which I will not say they have proposed, but to which they have acceded? Is this too all vain delusion; or have they, with me, been degraded

graded by a panic which they assume when military matters are under consideration, and reject with indignation when the naval force is the subject of debate? It has been truly said by my right hon. Friend (Mr. Wilberforce), that the naval defence of the land is our national passion, in which we indulge all the excesses of instinctive pride. With this generous propensity, let us look to the collective strength of the enemy on the opposite coast, which seems to realize the fictions of ancient story. Can it be supposed, with this view before us, we can for a moment forget all the advantages of our insular situation; the glories of our maritime strength; the navy which has extended our commerce, which has established our authority, which has raised us to the rank we enjoy amongst surrounding empires, and which has conducted to our command and aggrandizement in every quarter of the earth? Can we, I say, in the moment of danger, fail to remember this grand source of public security? In such a crisis as this, am I, with all the indifference of a cold comparison, to be referred to the commencement of the former war with France, when she was torn by civil dissensions; when she was encompassed by hostile nations in array against her; when all Europe was leagued for her destruction? Is that period to be assimilated to the present, when we are to meet her single-handed, without the co-operation of one ally; and are we to limit our exertions to what they were at the time when circumstances were thus totally different? Yet it will be recollected, that then the navy of this country, at least, was so far prepared, that scarcely one fleet ventured to forsake the ports of France that did not supply new laurels to the gallant defenders of their country, on the tempestuous element by which we are surrounded. The enemy, who have lost their internal trade, their exterior commerce, their fisheries, the very foundation of their navy, have, in the prosecution of a gigantic enterprise, created an artificial marine of prodigious extent; and are we not to proportion our means to the new circumstances in which we are placed, to the new perils to which we are exposed; and are we to have the ardour of all our generous passions dissipated by the application of this "cold comparison?" I trust, therefore, I shall not be accused of disgraceful fear, of idle panic, if I contend our exertions ought at this moment to exceed all former precedent; because the dangers by which we are encompassed exceed all former peril. Unless I am much mistaken, the kind of minor marine I have recommended, is a force easily prepared, neither

neither of tedious or expensive construction. But, Gentlemen have argued, as if I wished to lay aside the floating castles by which this country is protected, and to disband the British navy. I was sorry to hear an honourable Admiral (Sir Edward Pellew) deviate into this gross misapprehension. True it is, I have expressed some confidence in gun-vessels, for a particular purpose; but have I ever been insane enough to express a doubt, that for the blockade of Brest, Toulon, Ferrol, and the various ports occupied by the ships of the enemy, our men of war and our frigates should not be employed? Even should the flotilla of the enemy venture toward our coasts, I have no doubt that a wide destruction and general confusion will be occasioned by the annoyance they will receive from our regular navy; but some will probably escape among the vast multitude; and am I culpable in recommending that this lesser navy should be prepared, under such an emergency, to render certain that security which would otherwise be only probable? Our first defence is then by our larger ships; our next in the shallows by our flotilla; the third expedient is, to prevent the landing of the enemy; and the fourth and least convenient is, when they have gained a footing on English ground, to meet them in the field of slaughter. Will Gentlemen, who affect to despise these gun-vessels, not admit, that between the ports of Harwich and Portsmouth, there are numerous banks and shallows, where ships of the line are incapable of approaching the shore? I am not ashamed to say, before professional gentlemen, however eminent, that if we neglect to provide against contingencies, by the kind of force to which I have now adverted, we do not do all in our power to conduce to the national safety. Terms of derision have been employed to render this species of marine defence contemptible, and it has been called a Mosquito fleet; but when Gentlemen are pressed a little more on the subject, then we are told there are 500 or 700 volunteer gun-boats. These boats, we are to recollect, are not under the immediate command of the Admiralty, and have actually been forced into its service by the enthusiasm of the people. A great proportion of these are engaged on an extent of coast with which I am particularly acquainted, and I know this force would have been ready much sooner, and would have been in a much better condition, if the Admiralty had given them due encouragement. Honourable Gentlemen have dilated on the distinction of gun-boats and gun-brigs, and the latter have, it seems, received some commendation

commendation from high professional authority. It is to gun-vessels of this last description that I have all along adhered; and twenty of these, which have had the foremost duty under Lord Keith, are those which were fitted out in the time of Lord Spencer; so that the utility of these is acknowledged by Lord St. Vincent; and as a further proof, those that have been lately ordered, under the circumstances stated, are precisely of the same kind, and differ only in the delay, I contend, needless delay, in their construction. I have then the satisfaction to reflect, that my sentiments are sanctioned by the approbation of the Admiralty; and all I regret is, the procrastination. But we are amused with a brilliant flash of eloquence (not lately a source of ordinary entertainment in this House), and we are told by an hon. Gentleman, all this scheme of gun-vessels is a job. This sentiment, clothed in a wandering meteor, which fixed its ray of indignation upon me, shall not so far dazzle my organs of vision, as to prevent my discovering the way by which I may relieve myself from the terrors of its effulgence. It is not necessary to conclude, because a service has been converted into a job, that it is a useless service. If pernicious food have been given to the hon. Gentleman, he would not conceive it to be a reason for abstaining from all nourishment; so in the former case we must learn to distinguish between accident and substance, and rejecting what is injurious, retain what is valuable. But as Ministers have boasted of the comparative force, let us for a moment examine what it is. In 1801, we had 101 sloops, we have now 84; we then had 69 gun-vessels, we have now 37; we then had 101 cutters, we have now 52. It is conceived to be a fatal objection to these smaller vessels, that they will engage those men who would be more usefully employed to supply the crews of the regular navy. Does it occur to the House how small a number these vessels require? How many that are free from the impress would gladly engage in a service of this kind. When the enemy approach, it is highly probable we shall have some days notice, for so vast a machine cannot be put in motion without giving us full opportunity of observation. This notice would give us ample means of supplying this flotilla from a thousand sources. If Ministers have not a sufficient number of seamen, they might have applied to Parliament for more, and no hesitation would have occurred in a compliance with their request. It is said much has been argued on this frivolous subject of twenty-three gun boats, and that it did not deserve

Notice, much less to have been made a ground for the present application to the House. The smallness of the quantity is the very ground of the objection; in all I have said I must have been wholly misunderstood, if Gentlemen are not aware that the objection is stronger in proportion to the insignificance and contemptibility of the affair to which it is directed. All the motive of this discussion on my part, is to shew that the exertions in the naval department are inadequate. Great as may be my respect for Lord St. Vincent, I cannot be guilty of the hypocrisy to say, this department of the service has been wisely conducted. I have a greater stake, even than the reputation of the noble Lord, it is no less than the safety and existence of the country, and the fulfilment of my duty at this critical juncture, as a Member of the British Parliament. What in nature can induce the Admiralty, acknowledging as they do the utility of this force, thus to circumscribe it? This conduct seems to be governed by some such motives as influenced the 5th Harry, when he would not have another hero to share in the victory. Are they fearful of adding another gun brig to partake the glory? The building in merchants' yards, they say, is subject to serious objections. As far as my experience can inform, none of those that have been stated, are capable of being supported. Have we not the best mercantile marine in the world, and is not that erected in these yards? The ships of the East-India Company, which are as perfect and complete as any applied to the purposes of navigation on any service whatever, are built in these yards. Why then are these extensive depôts of private property and public industry to be so mercilessly decried? The hon. Gentleman who was so severe in his censures on the merchants' yards, was not less so in his remarks on the speculation in his Majesty's yards, and these he introduced as a defence of the noble Lord; but he was not aware that he by this defeated his own purpose, and tended to shew that the navy could nowhere be supplied; for both in the private and public institutions for its maintenance, there was such a system of nefarious dealing, as to make them both equally unfit to be employed.—Mr. Pitt, in conclusion, delivered an eloquent panegyric on the gallantry of Lord St. Vincent, and declared that he was solely actuated in thus coming forward by motives of public duty. No admiration, however great, of the character of an individual, or even gratitude due for services to any character or person, should ever induce him to make
a sa-

a sacrifice of his public and parliamentary duty. He had been happy to see the noble Earl placed in his present situation, to which he conceived his name would be a tower of strength, and such he believed had been his language. However, in his estimation, it was no disgrace to acknowledge that he had at one time formed a sanguine opinion, which subsequent experience induced him to alter; and being so disappointed, to act, not upon the preconceived opinion, but upon that matured by experience. He was sorry that what he proposed might tend in some degree to implicate Earl St. Vincent, but he had to repeat, that no tenderness, no consideration for that character, high and great as it deservedly was, should induce him to sacrifice his duty to the public, whose safety, in such a crisis as the present, was the first object of his heart.

Sir James Pulteney spoke in defence of the conduct of the Board of Admiralty, and recapitulating the statements of Sir Edward Pellew, Captain Markham, and Mr. Addington, respecting the state and efficiency of our naval force, contended that we were able to block up the enemy in their ports, and thus to deride their menaces of invasion.

At half past twelve the House became urgent for the question, and the gallery was cleared. We understand Mr. Pitt's first and second motions were agreed to. Upon the question being put on the third, some further discussion took place, introduced by Mr. Fox. At half past one o'clock the House divided, when the numbers were,

For Mr. Pitt's motion - 130

Against it - - - - - 201—Majority 71.

Adjourned.

List of the Minority on Mr. Pitt's Motion.

Adams, William
Allen, Jefferys
Adair, Robert
Butler, hon. —
Buxton, Sir R. J.
Barton, F. W.
Burdett, Sir Francis
Banks, H.
Bradshaw, R. H.
Brooke, Lord
Bligh, Thomas
Berkeley, Admiral

Burroughs, W.
Boote, Edward Wilbraham
Babbington, Thomas
Cooke, Bryan
Creevey, Thomas
Courtenay, J.
Canning, right hon. G.
Cartwright, W. R.
Cowper, hon. Spencer
Craufurd, Colonel
Caulfield, hon. H.
Chapman, C.

Coddington, Ch.	Leigh, R. Holt
Daly, Bowes	Lovaine, Lord
Douglas, Marquis of	Lascelles, hon. Ed.
Dundas, hon. Ch.	Lascelles, hon. H.
Dundas, hon. G.	Latouche, R.
Dundas, right hon. Wm.	Latouche, J.
Dickson, Colonel	Laurence, Dr.
Duncombe, Charles	Lawley, Sir R.
Dent, John	Lennox, General
Dillon, hon. A.	Lowther, John
Dupre, James	Lambe, T. Davis
Denniffon, John	Lowther, Colonel James
Dickinson, William	Maddocks, W. A.
Dickinson, W. jun.	Milner, Sir Wm.
Elford, Sir W.	Milner, James
Ellis, Ch. Rose	Mildmay, Sir H.
Euston, Earl of	Morpeth, Lord
Elliot, William	Morland, W.
Fox, hon. Charles James	North, Dudley
Francis, Philip	Newport, Sir J.
Fitzpatrick, General	Ossulston, Lord
Foljambe, F.	Ord, William
Foster, right hon. John	Osborne, John
Ferguson, James	Ponsonby, George
Fitzhugh, William	Petty, Lord Henry
Fitzharris, Viscount	Peirse, H.
Folkstone, Viscount	Ponsonby, right hon. W.
Falkiner, F. J.	Pitt, right hon. W.
Garland, George	Proby, Lord
Gower, Lord G. L.	Porchester, Lord
Gunning, G. W.	Portman, E. B.
Grenville, hon. T.	Percher, Josias Dupre
Gregor, F.	Penn, Richard
Greenfell, Pascoe	Preston, Sir R.
Graham, James	Russell, Lord William
Henderson, A.	Spencer, Lord Robert
Hardiman, Edward	St. John, St. Andrew
Hippisley, Sir J. Cox	Saville, Christopher
Holland, H.	Sneyd, N.
Jolliffe, Hyhton	Smith, G.
Jeffery, John	Smith, S.
Kinnaird, hon. Charles	Smith, J.
Kensington, Lord	Smith, Joshua
Langton, Gore	Sloane, Colonel

Scott,

Scott, Claude

Scott, S.

Scott, Joseph

Thelluffon, P. T.

Temple, Earl

Thornton, Robert

Thornton, Samuel

Turner, Edward

Villiers, right hon. J. C.

Whyte, M.

Walpole, hon. George

Wilberforce, William

Willet, J. W.

Ward, Robert

Ward, hon. John William

Windham, right hon. Wm.

Wynne, C. W. W.

Wynne, Sir W. W.

Wrottesley, Sir J.

Wigram, Robert

Bourne, Sturges

Long, right hon. C. } Tellers.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

FRIDAY, MARCH 16.

Counsel were heard in the appeal from the Court of Session in Scotland, the hon. Captain Charles Elphinstone Fleming against the hon. George Abercromby, of Tallybody. The further consideration was postponed till Monday.

The Irish malt duty, Irish revenue, Irish countervailing duty, and Irish hide and tallow duty bills, were brought from the Commons and read a first time.

The bills on the table were forwarded in their stages.

Adjourned till Monday.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

FRIDAY, MARCH 16.

The Scotch bank stock bill was read a second time, and committed to a private Committee.

On the motion of Mr. Sargent a new writ was ordered for the election of a representative for the borough of Yarmouth in the county of Southampton, in the room of John Delgarno, Esq. who has accepted of the Stewartry of the Chiltern Hundreds.

Mr. Corry brought in a bill for the relief of the families of the Irish militiamen; which was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time on Monday next.

The Exchequer bills bill went through a Committee, and the report was ordered to be received on Monday.

Lord William Russell rose to submit a motion respecting the

the present system for the improvement and keeping in repair the public highways. The noble Lord stated the reasons which induced him to bring forward this proposition. He understood it to be generally known, that much practical inconvenience had arisen from the mode which, under the law as it now stood, was resorted to in order to provide for statute labour, or the performance of statute duty. This labour was felt to be very considerable, and the burthen of taxation necessary to provide for it very unequally distributed, inasmuch that it was the general wish that some better arrangement should be adopted. This wish was expressed so strongly, at a very respectable assemblage of the magistrates of the county which he had the honour to represent, that he felt it to be his duty to introduce the subject to the notice of Parliament; at the same time he would be much more happy that the business had been undertaken by some person of more ability and weight than he possessed. The noble Lord concluded with moving for leave to bring in a bill to alter and amend so much of the act of the 34th of his present Majesty, as relates to the sums to be paid by persons who shall compound for statute labour.

Sir Robert Buxton had no objection to the motion, but wished some regulation to be introduced into this bill with respect to the dimensions of the wheels of carts, &c. which should be employed in the performance of statute labour, &c.

The *Speaker* observed, that the suggestion of the hon. Baronet could not be introduced into the bill under its present title, but that at a future stage that title might be altered, and a clause, correspondent to the hon. Member's idea, be incorporated with it.

Lord W. Russell's motion was agreed to.

Mr. Alexander brought up the report of the Committee on the neutral ships bill, which was agreed to, and the bill ordered to be read a third time on Monday.

Mr. Vanfittart brought in a bill to continue the act of the 41st of his present Majesty for allowing plantation sugar to be warehoused; which was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time on Monday.

This hon. Gentleman also introduced a bill for continuing the several regulations with respect to rape-seed, seal skins, the Greenland whale fishery, oil and blubber, &c. &c. as recommended by the resolutions of the expiring laws Committee. This bill was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time on Monday.

The

The other orders of the day were disposed of, and the House adjourned till Monday.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

MONDAY, MARCH 19.

Counsel were heard in continuation relative to the Scotch appeal, *Fleming v. Abercromby*: the further hearing of the case was adjourned till Wednesday.

The various bills before the House were forwarded in their respective stages. Among these, the Irish revenue, the Irish malt duty, the Irish countervailing duties, and the hides and tallow importation bills were severally read a second time.

Some private business was then disposed of, after which their Lordships adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, MARCH 19.

The bill for increasing the rate of subsistence to intkeepers and others, on quartering soldiers, was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time the next day.

The Exchequer bills bill was ordered to be read a third time the next day, if then engrossed.

The neutral ships bill was read a third time and passed.

The sugar warehouse bill, and the expiring laws bill, were read a second time, and ordered to be committed to a Committee of the whole House the next day.

The Irish militia families provision bill was read a second time, and ordered to be committed to a Committee of the whole House on Thursday next.

Mr. Gregor, after a few observations on the importance of the subject, and the necessity of the House and the public having more information upon it than they possessed at present, moved, That there be laid before the House an account of the number of districts from which assessments under the property tax have been returned to the office appropriated to receive the same, stating the total sum assessed. Ordered.

That there be also laid before the House an account of the number of districts from which no such assessments have been returned into the said office. Ordered.

VOLUNTEER

VOLUNTEER REGULATIONS BILL.

Mr. Secretary Yorke moved the order of the day on the volunteer regulations bill, which was for taking the report of the bill into further consideration. He then observed, that before the motion was put, he wished to take notice of a circumstance which came to his knowledge that day, and which he conceived to be of considerable importance: he alluded to a clause in the bill, which respected the time at which his Majesty shall be empowered to summon and call out the volunteers for actual service: namely, in case of invasion by the enemy. The words "united kingdom," had been adverted to, and it was supposed by some that the clause was introduced into the bill improperly or unfairly. He hoped the House would not think it was introduced with intention to deceive any body. When he introduced the bill, it was intended to be a bill for both Great Britain and Ireland, and he believed he stated it to be his opinion that the power of his Majesty to call out the volunteers extended to Ireland, as well as Great Britain. It was thus brought into the House, and printed on the 10th of February, containing provisions applicable to both Great Britain and Ireland, and affecting both in its preamble; the clause was then drawn up, as he should state to the House.—[Here he read the clause.]—Instead, however, of extending to Ireland, under the words "united kingdom," he had thought it better to introduce the word "realm," and he then thought the word realm was applicable both to Great Britain and Ireland, and therefore that word was substituted for the words "the united kingdom," and so the bill was printed, and the bill thus printed contained a clause to this effect. When the bill was committed, he stated that the clause which related to the volunteers of Ireland was withdrawn, and that the present volunteer law of Ireland was to stand; and when the clause was struck out, and the word "realm" was struck out, the bill, with the words "united kingdom" inserted in it, was printed so long ago as the 2d of March. The bill had been since twice in the Committee, and now was reprinted with this clause in it without any Gentleman taking notice of it. He stated this to justify himself. He was of opinion then, and he now retained that opinion, that it would be advisable, in many points of view, that his Majesty should have the power as given to him at present by this clause, that in case of invasion on the coast of Ireland, and that his Majesty's regular force

force should be detached to Ireland, his Majesty should have power to call out the volunteers. But as misapprehension had gone abroad upon that subject, and as it was not understood generally in that House, that the bill should be so, nor did the volunteers appear so to understand the bill, he thought it better not to hazard any thing that might have the appearance of a violation of faith with the volunteers, for although they had still the power of withdrawing themselves if they thought that burden irksome, yet he did not wish to incur the hazard of appearing to violate faith with them : therefore when the House should come to the discussion of that particular clause, he should propose to alter that part of it. He spoke now only to justify himself to those Members of the House who choose to judge liberally and candidly, and he would be contented with their judgment on the subject. Some other hon. Gentlemen might object to it after this explanation ; how fairly and candidly, the House would consider. He wished however to save unnecessary discussion, which might have arisen on this subject, if he had not explained it.—He should move, “That this report be now taken into further consideration.”

General Tarleton observed, that as this was an opportunity for entering at large on the subject of the bill now before the House, he might do so ; but he should not trespass long upon the patience of the House : he should, however, submit to the House the observations and opinions which had been the guide and rule of his conduct upon this occasion ; in doing which he conceived that some obloquy might be cast upon him ; but he must nevertheless intreat the House and the country to reflect, that this is too momentous an occasion for trifling. There was no man existing who ought not to consider it his highest honour to shed his last drop of blood in his country's cause at the present crisis, and this he should be proud to do : but this was not all that a lover of his country ought to do, he ought also to bring forward, for its service, whatever his experience warranted him in suggesting for that purpose. It had been said, that we were now engaged in a war which the youngest man amongst us might not see the end of ; he therefore thought we should look to a permanent system for carrying it on with advantage, and in that view he could not help considering the volunteer system as very defective for that purpose. When Ministers brought forward the bill for the better disciplining the militia corps, he stated the situation of the army, and what it was necessary for Mi-

nisters to look to: that we were 15 millions of men in the presence of 40 millions of the most ambitious men upon earth for military triumph, and that therefore our safety required that our army should be placed in the best possible situation. The answer he received then was, that our militia could defeat the best troops in France; an assertion which did not make much impression upon him. He was not going to attack the volunteers on the ground of their magnanimity, or their courage, or their zeal, or ardour, or their love of their country; neither was he going to insinuate a suspicion of the valour or patriotism of any class of Englishmen: he knew they would all bravely fight for what they so dearly loved and had long enjoyed, the best constitution upon earth. He knew they were equal in courage and in every other virtue, to any people upon the face of the globe. What they wanted was, a wise system of policy, by which their strength should be directed. Whatever depended upon courage was never difficult to Englishmen; but it must not be forgotten that courage would not do without discipline, least of all against such an army as we have to contend with. Did Roman valour triumph over British valour? No! But discipline did, and so did German discipline in two instances, much too memorable in our history to need recital now. And was the science of war less complex, and owed less to discipline now, than at those early periods? He apprehended quite otherwise: he believed that science was now quite as difficult, and depended as much on discipline now as at any period since the commencement of the world. At the commencement of the volunteer system, he thought it good for the moment, because we wanted a sufficient army. As the matter came on upon the sudden, perhaps a better system could not have been adopted for the purpose of meeting a sudden irruption or invasion. But when the enemy did not choose to come at once, but might wait to a period which nobody could calculate, in order to come upon us at last when we might least expect it, and possibly be the least prepared; he thought it became the duty of his Majesty's Ministers, it was worthy of the wisdom of his Majesty's councils, to provide such an army as may be fit for a permanent service, such as they ought to do, because they could do it, as France had done, for she had at this hour the very largest army upon the face of the earth; and therefore, as the war was likely to be protracted, and the force of our enemy so great, it was the bounden duty of his Majesty's Ministers to have

have looked to other systems than the volunteer system for permanent operation.—Here the gallant officer entered into a detail of the orders which, as General of a District, he issued at Bristol, and its neighbourhood, for calling out the volunteer force, and of the very insubordinate manner in which his commands had been received and afterwards entirely disobeyed, notwithstanding his exhortations to them to do their duty like soldiers; of whole troops of horse insisting on doing as they pleased, without regard to the command of the General of the District; of some companies having declared a determination to fight it out on the parade rather than give up the point for which they contended; of his having written to his Majesty's Ministers upon this subject, representing to them the danger of this disobedience, to which he received an answer containing no more energy than to express a desire that the affair might be amicably arranged: from all which, as well as from the system by which this military disobedience was possible, he foresaw nothing but ruin, unless it was speedily altered. Having expatiated upon this topic at some length, he then came to another, which was equally unfavourable to the volunteer system, as one on which we were to look to permanent service, and which made him unfriendly to its continuance, although no one was more friendly to its institution as a sudden measure upon an emergency, and that was the interruption it gave to the regular service, both in the regiments of the line and the army of reserve, as well as the militia, for neither of which could men be procured, all the young men being actually locked up, as it were, in the volunteer corps. He related accounts he had from some Lord Lieutenants of counties, particularly that of Wilts, whom he spoke of very handsomely, as he did indeed of others; by these accounts it appeared that men were actually not to be had, the whole districts having been balloted over and over again, and there were no men fit to serve in the army of reserve or militia existing, except those who were already in the volunteer corps. All this made him think that the exemptions allowed to the volunteers were much too extensive, and that they had been the ruin of the service in a regular way. He was confident that this system of the volunteer corps could not be permanent. He was sorry to say that some measure of a compulsory nature must be adopted to complete the army of reserve, as well as to increase the regular army, so as to augment, very considerably, the disposable force of his

his Majesty; for otherwise we could never take any advantage of any circumstances that might occur in the affairs of the enemy: suppose any thing happened on account of Moreau, or any other great and popular man in France, what advantage could we turn it to, if we had not a large disposable force, such at least as 25,000 men, to be employed upon a sudden emergency? Nothing of this sort could be expected while the whole population was taken up with the volunteer corps, nor was any thing creditable to our arms to be expected while that mutinous disposition which he had stated prevailed in any part of our volunteers, or indeed any force: but although he thought it would, or might be of incalculable advantage to us in the course of the present contest, for us to have such a disposable force as might be employed on certain favourable opportunities, such as he had hinted at, yet he was one of those who would never wish to see a man sent out until both parts of the empire were entirely safe; what he meant to say was this, that if such an opportunity occurred now, we could not avail ourselves of it in the present state of our army, the whole of the young men of the country being locked up in the volunteer system. He said he was not bigotted to any system; all he wished was, that we might enter on the contest and face the destruction that threatened us, that we might get over it, and live like Englishmen, or if it must be so, that we might die like Englishmen. To place us in that situation it was necessary to adopt some new measures for the army, for that was the only way to put the country in the best state of security, and he was ready to confess, that he did not think it secure at present. The good that might result from adopting some measure for the purpose of enlarging the disposable military force of this country might be of this description, that of preventing horrors to which this country, thank God, had long been a stranger. If the population of the country was properly employed, all this might be prevented, but not otherwise. Upon these grounds he must confess he did not think favourably of the volunteer system; "but be that system what it may, whatever the danger may be," said he, "wherever it may arise, there I hope I shall be found doing my duty."

Mr. Cartwright said, that he did not rise to detain the House, by entering at large into the principle of the bill, or arguing how far volunteers or regulars were the most advantageous force. He was satisfied, we could not have raised so numerous or effective an establishment, for the internal

ternal defence of the kingdom, within so short a time, by any other means; and as the volunteers were now raised, he should be sorry to see them disbanded, till the attempt to invade us had either been defeated or abandoned. He agreed with the hon. General (General Tarleton) who had just sat down, in condemning the system of exemptions; he thought they did materially impede the recruiting service, and could not help being of opinion, had they not been conceded, that a great force of volunteers might still have been raised amongst that description of persons, to whom the exemptions were no object; he meant in the metropolis, in populous and provincial towns, or amongst the yeomen cavalry. The hon. Gentleman said, he was aware, the exemptions did not obstruct the ballot, but they materially increased the difficulty of procuring men to serve: before the exemptions were conceded, labouring men were induced to enlist into the army from the apprehension of being balloted; reasoning with themselves, that it was better to serve and take a bounty, than to wait till they were drawn, when they would be obliged without alternative to go. But Mr. Cartwright said, he rose more particularly to advert to a part of the bill which he had before noticed, without attracting much observation, in the Committee, and which he considered liable to the strongest objection. He alluded to a proviso, which deprives any person enrolled in any corps which has agreed to serve for any particular period, of the liberty to resign until that period has elapsed. Mr. Cartwright said, this proviso, if left in the bill, would deprive a great proportion of the volunteers throughout the kingdom of the right of resignation; he meant all those, who had agreed to serve during the war; which was a very common article of agreement, which Mr. Cartwright had proposed to the corps he commanded, and which had been accepted by the men, without its being considered by either party as operating to restrict them from retiring. Mr. Cartwright said, he had served the whole of last war in a volunteer corps, under an article of this description; but it never was understood to have the meaning now intended to be applied to it; it was a general kind of article, intended only to show, that the corps was proposed to be continued only during the war. But, (said Mr. Cartwright), let us only consider, if this proviso is suffered to remain in its present shape, how the question of the right of resignation will stand. Upon the volunteers being first raised, they were told, according to the received opinion then entertained by all, that they had the power to resign

resign at any time; then came the Attorney General's opinion, and they were informed they had not that power; then came the decree of the Court of King's Bench, and they were again led to believe the power was restored to them; and now should this clause be persevered in, they will have to learn once more, they have no power to resign till the end of the war. Mr. Cartwright said, under these embarrassing and irritating circumstances, he would not answer for the consequences; and he seriously thought the only line for a commanding officer to adopt, in order to prevent confusion, was to disregard the intentions of Government, and notwithstanding the control he is hereby invested with, to allow any man to retire when he chooses. Such would be the line he should think it his duty to adopt; and from the sincerest conviction, it was the only prudent one to follow. He concluded with saying, he should oppose the bill, if this proviso was not withdrawn.

Mr. Erskine said, he was delivered from a great deal of anxiety, by the declaration of the right hon. Gentleman opposite to him, upon the extension of the bill—(alluding to Mr. Secretary Yorke's declaration with respect to the clause for calling out the volunteers of this country, in case of insurrection or invasion in Ireland);—he hoped also, that the right hon. Gentleman would, upon reflection, feel the propriety of altering the clause, to which the hon. Gentleman who spoke last had objected, which might be done by the introduction of a few words, for the clause was, at present, too general: he meant the clause which prevented all volunteers from resigning who had already agreed to continue their services during the war. This clause, he apprehended, the House could not persist in, consistently with the judgment of the Court of King's Bench, and the declarations of Ministers subsequent to that decision, stating, that if that had not been declared to be the law, they intended to propose that it should become the law. Now, what was the ground of the decision of the Court of King's Bench upon the question, whether a volunteer had power to resign? It was not founded on the construction but the nature of the service. If a man came out under arms upon the occasion of an invasion, what was the duration of his engagement? The duration of that engagement was, as long as the enemy continues in the country, whose entrance into it created that service; but that continuance was not necessarily, and at all events, the same as the duration of the war. Since the judgment of

of the Court of King's Bench had been given, some volunteer corps had come forward and offered their services during the war; he thought the clause; as it now stood, was too general with regard to such corps, and wanted some amendment. He thought that this bill ought not to tie any volunteers down to any thing that they had hitherto done, but that, before their services should be declared permanent, and that they should not be at liberty to retire from the service, they should be all asked by their commanding officer, "will you now, knowing as you do that you are at liberty to retire if you think fit, wave that right, and agree to serve during this war?" If afterwards they assented to this proposition, it might be binding on them: but he would not approve of fastening this permanency of service upon them for any thing they had already done, because that would be imposing terms upon some volunteers which could not affect others. If any one general system of enactment was proposed, by which all his Majesty's subjects were to be affected alike, the volunteers would have no reason to complain, nor would they complain he was confident; but they should not be selected as persons on whom any terms should be fastened different from any other class of his Majesty's subjects.—The hon. Gentleman took notice of the difference which subsisted between him and his learned and hon. Friend, the Attorney General, and which the Court had determined in his favour. They had only differed upon the question, whether a volunteer was bound by law; they had no difference of opinion whether a volunteer was bound by honour to continue his services while his country might want them. He had no difficulty in saying, that the man ought to be branded with eternal infamy who withdrew his service while his country was in danger; but still a volunteer should have the power of resigning, unless he had specifically waved that power after being seriously asked:—this was the principle on which the Court of King's Bench had decided the question. Here he quoted all the former acts of Parliament on which that decision was founded, to justify the principle of that decision, and for the purpose of showing the propriety of adhering to it in the present case. Nor had he any doubt but that the volunteers would do the highest honour to the confidence which their country reposed in them, if ever the opportunity should offer. For these reasons he thought there should be no enactment to impose upon the volunteers any terms which were not imposed on all classes

classes of his Majesty's subjects. He adverted also to that part of the bill which provided that masters should not interfere with the volunteer service of their apprentices and servants, as a part of the bill of serious consideration.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* was decidedly of opinion that perfect faith with the volunteers must not only be kept inviolate, but that Parliament should not by any act incur the suspicion of a breach of faith in such a case. In order to remove all doubt upon that subject, he recommended, what he was assured his right hon. Friend would adopt, that instead of altering the clause spoken to by the hon. and learned Gentleman, it should be left out of the bill altogether. He approved, however, of the clause in the bill which prevented masters from interfering with the voluntary services of their apprentices and servants.

Mr. Whitbread animadverted at some length upon the different clauses of the bill. He thought, he said, it would have been far better if the exemptions had been wholly taken away, as they were not expected, and the taking them away would have been no breach of faith. According to the original system, the volunteers, at least those embodied under the subsequent acts, were not entitled to those exemptions, and the force of the country would have been much more effective if they had not been allowed. He perceived in the bill a clause allowing commanding officers to grant leave of absence to members of the corps; but those to whom leave of absence was granted, were obliged to make up the number of days of attendance (twenty-four) in the course of the year, or otherwise they would not be entitled to exemptions. Now it might happen that a very good and zealous volunteer might by sickness be prevented from attending for so long a time, that it would be impossible for him to make up the number of days of attendance in the course of the year, because the corps to which he belonged would not muster often enough, and he might then, without any fault of his own, be deprived of his exemption. This, he thought, was a species of injustice which it was impossible the House would suffer to remain. There was also a proviso in the bill, that a commanding officer should make a special return, in conformity with the schedule annexed to the act; there was a penalty on making a false return, but none on making no return at all; now it might happen that a commanding officer might by making no return deprive a whole corps of their exemptions; this also required amendment. The next point to which he meant to advert was, the power given to commanding officers to dismiss members

members of their corps; he found, however, that there was a provision that nothing should extend to abrogate the rules and regulations of any corps approved of by his Majesty. Upon this subject he begged leave to ask, whether this proviso extended only to those corps who had sent in their rules and regulations to the Secretary of State, to be approved of by his Majesty? Certainly the enactments upon this subject ought to be more explicit. Another point was the power given to commanding officers to disallow a day's exemption or a day's pay, for misconduct in any member of the corps: to this he objected, because it might happen that a volunteer might very meritoriously attend for twenty-three days in the year, and on the 24th might do something displeasing to his commanding officer, who might in a moment of irritation disallow a day's exemption, which might deprive the person of his exemption altogether. This was a power so wholly unjust, that if the clause relating to this subject was not altered, he should object to the bill altogether. Another objection he had to the bill was, the power given to commanding officers to order persons under arrest for misconduct whilst under arms; this he thought could produce no good, but on the contrary, might give rise to mutiny, whilst it would be ridiculous in itself, and could not lead to any beneficial consequence. Another point to which he wished to advert was, the right of resignation, clogged as it was with a condition that the person so resigning should previously pay all fines and penalties, and all subscriptions which he was or might be required by the rules and regulations of the corps to pay. It was known that the rules of any corps were liable to alteration: but was it to be said, that if 400 men out of 500 belonging to any corps chose to pay a subscription of ten guineas each, the remaining 100 were not to be allowed to resign until they had paid the ten guineas, which they had never previously agreed to pay? This must certainly be an act of injustice. There was another consideration of great importance, which related to the contracts between master and servant. The volunteer service might go to alter the nature of this contract altogether. It must be evident that those servants who were in volunteer corps, and who might go to drill whenever they pleased, might, out of pique towards their master, do it when they were most wanted. The farmer, thus liable to injury from his servants, might altogether give up the practice of hiring by the year, because when he went to a magistrate to require compensation for the loss of his servants' time upon such a duty, he must necessarily do it with a bad grace, and, from the bias of

men's minds, was liable to considerable obloquy upon such an occasion. The remedy, therefore, which suggested itself to the farmer was, to hire by the week, and then if the servant went to attend a volunteer corps at a time when he was most wanted, he might at the end of the week be discharged. The Government had volunteers enough, without taking servants and apprentices from their masters. Apprentices who received no pay for their labour, had frequently entered into volunteer corps, attended drills, laughed at their masters, and pocketed a shilling to spend as they pleased. To this he entirely objected. A statement had been laid upon the table of the number of volunteers, upon which as to their efficiency he did not rely, but certainly there was enough without taking servants and apprentices. He observed, that there was a provision in the bill for paying armourers for cleaning the arms of volunteer corps; he could not conceive why other payments were not directed to adjutants and others, who were assisting in disciplining these corps. They had been told three weeks since, that the enemy were shortly expected, and yet the bill had not passed through the House. Many volunteer corps were still not even provided with the necessaries for a march, nor had they any funds to buy them; and, with respect to this subject, he wished to know where they were to look for them, or how to apply for them? With respect to the recovery of fines, a deal of discussion had taken place on a former night, as to the question, whether imprisonment should be, in some cases, substituted for distress; but he was considerably surprised to find that in the present bill, imprisonment was not mentioned at all; on the contrary, it was provided that seven days notice of an intended distress for fines should be given; this, to a certain description of volunteers, would only be a notice to run away. It appeared to him the volunteer system was not amended by the present bill; that, on the contrary, the present measure would tend to disgust the volunteers, and create great doubts and difficulties; and he should therefore oppose it altogether. He had great doubts of the efficacy of the volunteer system; but as we had it to answer the emergency of the moment, he thought it ought to be made as effective as possible.

Mr. Secretary Yorke said, that as the hon. Gentleman had gone pretty much into detail, he thought it necessary in some measure to follow him. Why the hon. Gentleman had supposed that the bill was not calculated to render the volunteers more effective than they are as it at present stood, he was at a loss to conceive. He should proceed to advert to the clauses objected to by the hon. Gentleman, conceiving that there was

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no question now as to the principle of the volunteer system, but only how far the present bill could be rendered effective. The hon. Gentleman had expressed a wish that the exemptions were wholly taken away from the volunteers; but upon this subject he must observe, that if any Gentleman would take the trouble to look into the defence act, he would find there the arrangement made for the enrolment of volunteers. This being the case the only question was, whether the provisions of the defence act took them out of the general law with respect to exemptions, and the Crown lawyers were of opinion that the exemptions extended to them indiscriminately. Be that as it might, however, the exemptions had been given to the volunteers in general, and could not be taken away without a manifest breach of faith. It had been said, that the exemptions ought to have been wholly taken away from the volunteers, they having the right of resignation; but he could not but consider such a measure as extremely unjust in its principle, and highly inexpedient in point of policy. With respect to commanding officers granting leave of absence, and members of volunteer corps thereby standing a chance of losing their exemptions, the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Whitbread) would find, that there was a special provision made with respect to sickness, whereby volunteers thus situated might be entitled to their exemptions, although not able to attend: as to urgent business, when leave of absence might be granted for four months, it was not unreasonable to ask those to whom such leave of absence was granted, to make up their number of days of attendance in the course of the remainder of the year. The next point adverted to by the hon. Gentleman was, that there was no penalty attached to the commanding officer in consequence of making no return. In answer to this, however, he thought it an extreme case to suppose, that a commanding officer should omit to do that which was of such great importance to his corps. He had only met with one case of that description, and that arose from a misconception of the law upon the subject, and as no law respecting volunteers had provided against such a circumstance, it proved that it was no grievance. Upon another point it had been asked, whether the rules and regulations of a corps were not to be considered as of any effect, unless approved of by his Majesty? He conceived they were of force unless abrogated by his Majesty, the only object being to give his Majesty a power of abrogating them, if necessary. As to the next point, that a commanding officer might deprive a volunteer of his exemptions, by mulcting him one day's exemption on the 24th day, after he had attended the preceding

23, he considered this as not very likely to happen, as the commandant was not obliged to make a return upon the spot, but perhaps not till two months afterwards; there was therefore sufficient time for him to reconsider any act done in the heat of the moment, and to return any man as exempted whom he had previously struck out. The hon. Gentleman had objected to give a power to commanding officers to put a volunteer under arrest; it appeared to him, however, that such a power given to commanding officers whilst the corps were under arms, was necessary to preserve the requisite order and discipline in these corps. The hon. Gentleman had then adverted to the power of resignation and the subsequent condition. He admitted upon this subject the justice of what had been stated by the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Erskine) with respect to volunteers who had offered their services for a specific time; and besides, as the number of days of exercise had been altered from 5 to 24, the volunteer might say, that there was a different service established to what he had agreed to, and he had therefore no objection to alter the proviso relating to this subject. With respect to what had been urged relative to servants enrolling in volunteer corps, the hon. Member (Mr. Whitbread) and the House would observe, that the bill was founded upon the defence act, and that under that act no exemption was considered with respect to servants, their duty to the public being conceived to be of much greater importance than the contract between master and servant. He understood that great impediments had been thrown in the way of the volunteer system by masters in different parts of the country, complaining of their servants neglecting their business to attend volunteer corps; but though in the first instance corps might exercise a great number of days, yet now they only exercised a sufficient number to entitle them to exemptions, therefore the objection with respect to servants exercising would be in a great measure done away. But it had been said that having so great a number of volunteers (and he thanked God they were so numerous) why take servants and apprentices? He was not however disposed to give up any part of the number of volunteers upon such a ground. He confessed he looked forward to a considerable defalcation of the volunteer system, but he always wished to call the attention of the House to this circumstance, that they had still the defence act to rely upon. In supposing this defalcation therefore, he would not consent to lay aside
servants

servants and apprentices from the volunteers, particularly as in many manufacturing towns the apprentices formed the great mass of the population; whilst under the defence act they were liable to be called out and to be ultimately enrolled. The hon. Gentleman had asked why not enact payments to the drummers, &c. of volunteer corps, as well as the armourers? To this he should answer, by referring to the militia, where no allowances were enacted by any positive laws, but an estimate was brought forward every year, for the purpose of making these payments out of the land tax. So with respect to the volunteers, he saw no reason for putting into the bill any enactments for allowances which must be continually liable to alterations, whilst it could be done so much more satisfactorily by an estimate, which could be presented every year, and which would be open to every body for remark, with respect to any increase of expence upon this subject. Ministers had been charged with a pitiful economy, but he knew well the difference between that and a wise distribution of expence, to the latter of which they endeavoured to adhere; at the same time, he thought it necessary to observe, that Parliament might probably be called upon for some increase in the allowances to volunteers. The hon. Gentleman had said, that several volunteer corps were still unprovided with necessaries for a march, and knew not where to apply for the necessary funds: in answer to which he should observe, that when volunteers were called out into actual service, they were entitled to two guineas each, to provide themselves with necessaries, which was sufficient for the purpose, and that there was also a provision made for supplying them with haversacks, canteens, &c. whilst, upon an emergency, they might use a stocking for a haversack, and a bottle for a canteen. The honourable Gentleman had expressed his surprise, that nothing about imprisonment was mentioned in the bill; but if he had been in the House at the time, he would have known that he (Mr. Yorke) objected to imprisonment, and that it was at length agreed by the House to leave the clause pretty much as it was. As to giving seven days notice of an intended distress, he thought it was but reasonable and just to give that notice to the person who was the object of the penalties, in order to give him time to pay them, instead of resorting immediately to distress, which must tend greatly to injure his family. With respect to what had been said by the hon. General (General Tanleton) as to not being able to find an orderly dragoon in Bristol to carry

carry a message, he had to observe, that the hon. General had no right to give the order alluded to, to the commander of the Bristol cavalry; but there were at Bristol some orderly sergeants of militia, and why the honourable General did not send one of those he did not exactly understand. It should, however, be understood, that when the volunteers were not on actual duty they were not under the command of any General. There was no doubt they would be perfectly willing to go on any service that was required of them in case of emergency, but the hon. General had no power to send one of the volunteer cavalry on any service. As to what had been said with respect to the Frome Selwood Legion, the case was this, that the commanding officer wanted to give a particular company the precedence; to this the others objected. Considerable disputes arose, and on the case being represented to him, he (Mr. Yorke) advised an amicable accommodation; but that not being effected, the corps was dissolved, and the companies were afterwards re-established upon another footing. As to what had been said with respect to the volunteers been liable to be called out in case of the appearance of an enemy off any part of the united kingdom, he repeated what he had before stated, as to the manner in which the words relating to that provision had been introduced; but observed, that he would rather rely upon the zeal and energy of the volunteers here, in case of any hostile impression being made upon Ireland.

Mr. T. Grenville said that he had heard the right hon. Gentleman opposite to him, in opening the business now before the House, speak of a recommitment of the bill, but he had since heard no assurance of that kind from any of the Ministers. He wished to know in what stage of the bill the present discussion took place?

The *Speaker* said, that the question before the House was "that the report of the Committee be now taken into further consideration." Two things, therefore, were at the option of the House, either to agree to the report, or order the bill to be recommitted; or, instead of now, to appoint it to be taken into consideration on some future day.

Mr. Kinnaird thought that he would best perform his duty by opposing the receiving of the report. He viewed the present bill as an inefficient substitute for a crude and undigested system of defence. In all the deliberations on the present bill, the volunteers, he trusted, had been considered as divided into two classes; those who entered in June, and those

those who had not stepped forward till August. To those of the latter description he begged himself to be understood as applying his observations. During the last session, Parliament had under its consideration the defence act, which, under all its disadvantages, he had no hesitation in thinking infinitely superior to that now adopted in its stead. Under that act, the great body on whom the defence of the country must rest, would soon have been in a condition, at a small expence, to act in concert with the regular army. They were to have been trained by officers of the line, and were to have been subject to the same number of drill days as the force now resorted to. He begged it, therefore, to be considered, what must have been the difference in strength between such a force and one trained under the present system. They were, under the defence act, to have formed a systematic and regular body; by the present act, they were divided into disjointed and unequally disciplined corps.

Sir W. Young repeated what he had observed upon former occasions, with respect to the distinction which he conceived ought to be made between those volunteers who had come forward previous to the defence act, and those who had been subsequently enrolled. He contended, that the present bill was a bill of distrust with respect to the volunteers, as it went to inflict penalties, arrest, and imprisonment upon those who had patriotically and zealously come forward in the defence of their country.

The *Secretary at War* denied that the bill was a bill of distrust with respect to the volunteers. As to the arrest and imprisonment mentioned by the hon. Baronet, the latter was not mentioned in the bill, and the former was only introduced to preserve that discipline which was so necessary in volunteer corps, and was at the same time only to continue whilst the corps were under arms. As to the distinction taken by the hon. Baronet between two classes of volunteers, nobody denied that there was a distinction between the volunteers who had offered their services at different periods; but to make that distinction in the exemptions would be highly invidious. As to the objection urged by the hon. Gentleman (*Mr. Kinnaird*) respecting the drill serjeants for volunteer corps, the fact was, that the expence was merely transferred from the respective parishes to Government. With respect to what had been stated by the hon. General (*General Tarleton*) as to no orderly dragoon to be found at Bristol, because no one of the volunteer cavalry would become an orderly dragoon

goon to carry a message, he should only observe that the hon. General had no authority to require it, and that it was not exactly the use to be made of volunteer cavalry. As to what had been said by the hon. General relative to the deficiency in the 2d battalion of Wilts militia, it was impossible there could be any necessary deficiency, as out of 7000 volunteers who had offered their services, only 6000 had been accepted.

Mr. Alexander strenuously defended the volunteer system, which he contended was such as ought to remove every possible apprehension from any attack of the enemy. We possessed now a greater force than this country ever before possessed, and were in fact an armed nation. Much had been said of the levy-en-masse; but he contended, that there was no comparison between the reliance that could be placed upon them and upon the volunteers, because, however zealous they might be, they would want the discipline and regularity which the volunteers would possess. This had been exemplified in Ireland, where the yeomanry constantly defeated the people, who, it might be said, had risen in a mass. It was true, that in carrying on this contest, this country was at a great expence; but it was an expence within the country, and our treasures were not expended in Germany on foreign allies.

Mr. Fox said, that when he came into the House, he meant to have taken the sense of the House upon this subject, but he was induced not to persist in his intention for two reasons: first, because there was a determined system of misrepresentation upon this subject; every Gentleman that opposed any part of this measure was represented as being hostile to the whole volunteer system. Though there was not the slightest ground for such an insinuation, yet he did not choose to expose himself to such a misrepresentation, and therefore he would not take the sense of the House upon this motion. His other reason for declining it was, that Ministers must be so sensible of the imperfect state of this bill, that they must see the necessity of its being recommitted. Upon these grounds he would not take up more of the time of the House at present. It was not his intention to move the recommitment of the bill himself, but he hoped that some other Gentleman would do it, and he requested to be informed by the Speaker when would be the proper time to do it.

The *Speaker* said, that such a motion might be made when the present motion was disposed of, or at any time before the bill was engrossed.

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The motion was then agreed to.

Mr. Secretary Yorke immediately moved that the amendments be read a second time.

Mr. C. W. Wynne then rose, and expressed his intention of moving to recommit the bill.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* spoke to order, and said, that such a motion could not be made until the present motion for the second reading of the amendments was got rid of.

The *Speaker* said, he understood that the right hon. Secretary had waved his motion.

Mr. Yorke said he certainly had not waved it : as soon as the other motion was disposed of, he had, according to the usual form, made his present motion.

Mr. Grenville said, the right hon. Gentleman had certainly made the motion, but it was done in so rapid a manner, and after the other motions had been agreed to, with a view of a motion being made for the recommitment of the bill, that he did not think that the right hon. Gentleman could with candour persist in his motion.

Mr. Yorke said, he could not sit still while an imputation was thrown upon his conduct, in his public or private capacity. He had made the regular motion which it was his duty to make, and he certainly should persist in it.

Mr. Windham said, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not persist in his motion, because it was certainly made when the House were waiting for the opinion of the Chair upon the mode of proceeding.

The *Secretary at War* denied that the House were waiting for information from the Chair, because the Speaker had given to the House the information which was required, before the motion was made.

The *Speaker* shortly explained the proceeding which had taken place, and said, that the question now before the House was, that the amendments be read a second time.

Mr. C. W. Wynne opposed the motion, and was in favour of the bill's being recommitted.

Mr. Fox said, that it could now make no material difference, whether the observations which he had intended to offer were made in the present stage of the bill, or in a recommitment. Every Gentleman in the House must be aware, that it was not the object of the hon. Member who spoke last to throw out the bill, but to have it recommitted, in order that a measure which was worth nothing as it stood, might, if possible, be rendered worth something. He was for recommitting the bill, for the same reason that at present

he would be for throwing it out altogether. He was for recommitting it, because he was of opinion, that if passed in its present shape, the Government of this country would be held out to the public estimation in the most contemptible light in which any Government had hitherto stood. He professed himself by no means inimical to the voluntary force of the country. He agreed that that system, whether good or bad, was the only defence on which this country had now to rely. The defective features in this system had been experienced, and the attention of Ministers had been endeavoured to be directed towards them early in the present session of Parliament, and previous to the recess, but without success. No revision of the system was then deemed necessary. Parliament met on the 22d November, and now on the 19th of March not one measure had been adopted for strengthening the defence of the country. The whole of this momentous concern was entrusted to the bill now lying on the table. Parliament had now been sitting for four months; no step had, during this period, been taken for recruiting the army, or army of reserve; all rested on the voluntary defence, and the present bill contained every measure of vigour, of precaution or encouragement, which that system had been deemed capable of receiving. Could it then be denied that the measure which had alone been resorted to was calculated to expose to the public the incapacity and imbecility of Government, and to expose the proceedings of Parliament to derision and contempt? Let those most fond of the present bill say, in what respect it had added to the safety or defence of the country. Some clauses undoubtedly had been introduced by other Members, not concerned in the introduction of the measure, to conceal its nothingness; but after all, what did it contain? He declared that he had as high a respect for the volunteer force of the country as any man could have. Every man was bound to esteem it, as on it must our defence in a great measure depend. But what peculiar excellencies were to be found in this bill, which could call forth and increase the zeal, or animate the exertions of the volunteers? There were none such. It was entirely composed of subaltern regulations, of regulations rather calculated to disgust, than to animate and encourage. They were taken, bound to perform duties, and to submit to deprivations which were not in their contemplation at the time they offered their services. In case of an insurrection in Ireland, or a threatened invasion of that country, every man in England, by his avocations what they might, was, by the present bill, to be called

called out into actual service, and made subject to military law. Could any man think that the volunteers of Great Britain ever meant to undertake such an obligation? Ministers might indeed have desired them to look at this bill, and then have informed them that they must stand to their bond. But could such a stipulation have been in the contemplation of the volunteers, when they enrolled themselves? Let any man look at the acts under which the services of the volunteers were accepted, and he will see that they were to be marched only in the event of a rumour of invasion or actual landing on the coasts; and let him judge, whether by the words Great Britain, uniformly accompanying those stipulations throughout, the coasts of Great Britain alone were not in the contemplation of the volunteers, at the time of entering into such an engagement? The right hon. Gentleman might, no doubt, avail himself of the technical expressions in the present act to give support to such a plea. The volunteers might have other battles to fight with Ministers. They had already conquered them, but it was only by slow degrees. When they beat them out of one trench, Ministers betook themselves to another. When the volunteers gained the power of resigning, that power was endeavoured to be limited to one half of their number. It was said, however, that these two objectionable clauses should be done away. They had stood in the bill from the beginning, and might have been sooner perceived. He, for one, confessed that the interpretation which one of those clauses was capable of receiving had never occurred to him. He thought those Gentlemen who introduced the bill might have pointed out the interpretation, which they must have been aware the clause was capable of receiving, in an earlier stage of the bill, and not have reserved it till the bringing up of the report. Had it not been for the jealous caution of a learned Gentleman who spoke in an early part of the debate, the clause now alluded to might have been allowed to pass in its equivocal form, which would have been a gross violation of the faith pledged to the volunteers. The other clause, it must be admitted, had not been objected to now for the first time. The unjust tendency of it had been pointed out in the Committee, by an honourable Member under the gallery. It was then, however, defended by Ministers; and now, for the first time, they are pleased to give up this point also to the volunteers. All mankind had agreed in the right of volunteers to resign, except the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who had not been able to form any opinion on the subject; at least, if he had, he seemed resolved to

keep it to himself. Finding they could not do better, Ministers had at length brought in the present bill. They had at first denied the right of resigning: the Court of King's Bench sanctioned that right. The clause now alluded to took it away; and the honourable Gentleman hoped that the decision of that day would again restore it. He believed by the clause, as it stood at present, a great majority would be deprived of this right. But it was said, they might resign on giving 14 days notice. It was, however, undoubtedly the opinion of the volunteers, that they might do so at pleasure, without any notice whatever. Let it be recollected, that they were told on the first of February, that the threatened invasion might take place in the shortest possible period, and now on the 19th March, we are again to be informed, that 14 days notice must be given by any volunteer desirous of resigning. Thus, had it not been for the attention of the learned Gentleman (Mr. Erskine), and the hon. Member under the gallery, similar disputes might have been revived. A new opinion of the Attorney General, and a new bill to explain the opinion of Ministers, might have been necessary. But were these the only objectionable clauses in the bill? There are cases in which a person may forfeit his exemptions by non-attendance, probably for 12 days, even when labouring under indisposition. It is true he may regain his privilege by attending other 12 days, but how is this to be accomplished? Is his corps to be called out on purpose to enable him thus to qualify himself? The thing was ridiculous; Ministers were deceiving the volunteers, and holding out to them immunities which they could never realise. Another circumstance which had been noticed by an hon. Friend of his (Mr. Whitbread) he thought was particularly deserving of notice. Would any man seriously say that forty-four days service, in labouring of the ground, could be taken away from a farmer without injury to him? It was well known that contentions did subsist between masters and servants; and that the latter were often ready to take every advantage. No man could view the sanction given by that clause to a practice of this sort in any other light than as a kind of robbery. The time of an apprentice was his master's, not his own; by a solemn contract it had become so as much as any other property whatever. Yet by the present bill, apprentices are seduced from their master's service, and an inducement is held out to them to neglect his business. It is said a compensation will be given; but to whom? Not to the master, but to the apprentice. In the case of any improvement being to be carried

carried on, which occasions the appropriation of any private property, to whom is the compensation made? Why, surely, to the proprietor. This reasonable plan of proceeding, however, is departed from in the present instance. The compensation is taken away from the party who has a right to it, and is bestowed on another, as a recompence and inducement to him to desert his master's employment. The hon. Gentleman again alluded to the little progress that had been made in the defensive system during the present session, and declared his conviction, that he would not be wrong in asserting, that three-fourths of the volunteers who had been embodied at an early period, had never yet drawn a trigger. If no plan to expedite the arming and training of the volunteers could be devised, he was ashamed to think what opinion their constituents must entertain of the deliberations of that House, marked as the present bill was with such prominent symptoms of imbecility and weakness. The public had a right to expect, if Gentlemen rested their whole defence on a volunteer force, that they should have adopted some steps to render it as efficient as possible. They were entitled, at so awful a crisis, when armaments of an unparalleled and gigantic nature, and not only great but immediate, were to be opposed, to expect something like a proportionate defence. Like the poet, who lamented that in proportion to the smallness of our support, the evils which we had to encounter were great, he trembled at the danger to which we were exposed. He trembled the less, however, because he knew the spirit of the volunteers. They had battled and skirmished with Ministers, post after post. They had driven them from trench to trench, and were now come to engage them in their last war-dike. He was happy to think that the spirit of the country and of the volunteers would rise superior, not to the attempts of our enemies alone, but, what he thought a more arduous task, superior to the imbecility of Ministers.

The *Attorney General* could not at all see that any argument had been adduced to shew that the recommitment of the bill would be attended with the smallest advantage. It was contended by the hon. Gentleman who suggested the necessity of the recommitment, that a great deal too much time had been already spent on the bill; yet with this admission, the great object he now appeared to have in view was, that the bill should still longer occupy the attention of the House, and all this for the professed purpose of preventing the character of

of Parliament from being degraded. A great deal had been said about the present defective state of our military establishment, but for his own part he could not see how the recommendation had any thing at all to do with this business. Could any thing connected with the bill be done to increase our military establishment? Could going again into the Committee fill up any deficiencies in the army of reserve? No man could seriously urge such an opinion. The bill was designed to explain and amend what at present appeared defective in the volunteer system; but let it be sent back as often as Gentlemen pleased to a Committee, it must still come out of the Committee in its original form—of a bill for the better regulation of the volunteer establishment. On the one side of the House it was urged that the bill contained every provision which was best calculated to effect its object. If on the other side it was argued that there were other provisions wanting to complete the efficiency of the bill, it was then for those who held this opinion, to have, on former occasions, expressed their sentiments in the Committee. The bill had already passed through three Committees, and it was rather singular that none of those Gentlemen who now so graciously smiled complacence on each other in the prospect of having the bill recommitted, had ever thought of previously introducing their amendments. He begged leave to know what reason there was to expect in another Committee suggestions which had not been brought forward formerly, and unless such an expectation was held out to the House, he could not see why the report would not afford sufficient room for the reception of such amendments as appeared to be necessary. The hon. Gentleman who spoke last had come down to the House with the intention of giving his decided opposition to the bill, but certain circumstances had since occurred to alter his determination, and he was now contented with insisting on its recommitment. What these circumstances were he could not pretend to determine, for he could hardly imagine that they arose out of any thing which had taken place on the present occasion. Was it the clause which referred to the right of volunteers to resign, connected with corps which had engaged to serve during the whole war, or the clause, as the bill now stood, which directed that on the appearance of an enemy off the coast of Ireland, the volunteers should be placed on permanent duty? If either of these clauses had been to be continued in the bill, or even if a doubt had been retained as to the expediency of continuing
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the clauses, there might have been some ground for going again into the Committee. When, however, the point was given up in both cases, he was astonished to hear the hon. Gentleman insisting on the recommitment of the bill. His right hon. Friend near him (Mr. Yorke) had made the concession on this subject in the most handsome manner, and though he himself thought that it would be infinitely better to allow the bill to pass as it now stood, so far as these clauses were concerned, he would not at present go into any argument on the subject. As to the power of resignation, he did not mean now to detain the attention of the House. This was a subject to which, recollecting the opinion he had given, he could not advert without pain. He begged leave, however, to say, that the observations of his honourable and learned Friend this evening, sufficiently proved that this opinion of his, which he admitted to be erroneous, was not taken up on light grounds. His honourable and learned Friend allowed with him, that volunteers were under a powerful obligation of honour and morality, and if he in giving his opinion as to the right of resignation, had pushed the matter too far, his conduct was not without material circumstances of explanation. He begged the House to consider the opinion given in the Court of King's Bench was on a specific case. The Court had not taken up the matter generally, but had cautiously confined their decision to the precise matter referred to their consideration. If the question of resignation had been brought before them on the grounds furnished by the clause in question, he was not convinced that their decision would not have been very different in its completion. He, on the whole, saw nothing which should induce the House not to enter on the consideration of the report now, and thought that whatever improvements were intended could in this way be equally well received.

D. Laurence supported the motion for the recommitment. His principal reason for this was, that a number of the clauses now in the bill were introduced on a day (Saturday) when there was a very thin attendance of members. The bill was now seen for the first time as a whole, since it had last passed the Committee, and it appeared to him highly proper that it should be now recommitment, to give an opportunity for full and fair discussion of this very interesting subject. The hon. and learned Member expressed his decided disapprobation on the clauses as they now stand in the bill, with respect to the right of dismissal, and the compensation to be given to servants

vasts and apprentices. Ministers, in his opinion, had done nothing to improve the volunteer system laid down by the late Ministers.

Sir J. Wrottesley was for the recommitment. He intimated a wish to move for the introduction of a clause into the bill, for the better regulation of the number of days allotted to drill in corps in the country. He adverted to the number of volunteers in the metropolis and its vicinity; their number, he understood, was nearly 32,000, but out of that number, if he was rightly informed, nearly the half had engaged only to extend their services to the vicinity of the capital, even in case of invasion. It was his object that a clause should be introduced, taking away the exemptions from those whose services were thus limited.

Mr. Ald. Combe wished to explain to the hon. Baronet who had just sat down, the nature of the service of that part of the volunteer force in and about the metropolis, which the city of London had furnished, amounting to about 12,000 men. It had been understood as the undoubted prerogative of the Crown, that in case of actual invasion, or the appearance of the enemy upon the coast, his Majesty had the right to call forth the services of every man in the kingdom. The magistrates of the city adopting that principle, had recommended it to their fellow citizens to associate themselves for the purpose of learning the military exercise, and assisting the civil power in case of tumult or insurrection, thinking it would be a mockery to make an offer of services which, at a fit season, his Majesty could command; and he was quite sure, that in the whole number, there was not one man who did not consider himself liable, in case of invasion, to be put under the command of a general officer, and marched to any part of the kingdom. There was one other matter respecting the volunteers of the city, which he wished to state to the House, which was this, that no one could doubt that their offers of service arose from a pure patriotic public spirit, because as, by their charters, they were exempt from those military duties to which other parts of England are liable, they had no occasion to seek refuge from the ballots.

Mr. Pitt observed, that under the present circumstances, he should vote against recommitting the bill. With respect to the just expectations of the public from the measure, how far it conferred those fair benefits they were entitled to, he had already stated his opinion, he therefore should not trouble

ble the House with a repetition of it. The measure under consideration left many deficiencies in the system; there was not a proper degree of encouragement held out with respect to the important point of discipline; neither was there a sufficient number of days allowed for the purpose; and even when they had assembled, the means of instruction were not adequately afforded. At the same time, he was of opinion that the bill, with reference to the consideration of immediate danger, had one beneficial feature in the inducement it held to corps to come immediately forward upon permanent duty, with a view to the improvement of discipline, in its holding out a bounty; but even this, he feared, was in a degree that would not be sufficient for the purpose: it was, however, under the present circumstances, and as far as it went, a valuable and important consideration, and should be an inducement to the House to pass it without delay; he meant, with a reference to the expectation of a speedy invasion, against which they could not too soon be prepared. Though he could not avoid lamenting the imperfections of the bill, yet containing the provision he had alluded to, it should speedily be passed. There was another clause in the bill, which he thought likely to be of beneficial consequence, that which went to prevent the arrests of commanding officers while on service. With respect to the remaining parts of the bill, it was little more than a regulation of convenience, by consolidating into one, what before had been scattered into two or three different acts. He was impressed with the conviction of speedily passing this bill, or that nothing in fact would have hitherto been done; it should be acted upon as soon as possible. With respect to the proposal of recommitting the bill, he saw no prospect of great or substantial improvement which could be derived from such a proceeding. In regard to the subject of apprentices, the leave of absence, and certain other points on which some stress had been laid, he thought the bill was not liable to any serious objections on those heads. There were other topics upon which objections had been urged, but if these could not be effectually discussed upon the report, it would certainly be a reason for recommitting the bill; and he felt the importance of these points as much as any other person could do.

Mr. Sheridan was of opinion that whatever idea was entertained of the military system of the country, this was not the moment for such a discussion. If Gentlemen thought this a matter fit for inquiry, they might move for a Committee

tee on the subject, and the discussion might regularly take place. At present the question was extremely simple. It was merely whether certain amendments, the propriety of which was not denied even by the framers of the bill, should be introduced on the report or in a Committee for that specific purpose. For some time past he had, consistently with a principle which three years ago he had stated in that House, felt it his duty to absent himself from his attendance in Parliament, and he had consequently not been present at the different discussions which had taken place on the previous stages of the bill. This, however, he knew, that the bill had already been in three Committees, and the question came to be, should it go to a fourth Committee to receive new amendments and improvements? If it was true, what was stated by an hon. and learned Gentleman (Dr. Laurence), that the bill as a whole had not been before the Committee, this would be the strongest argument which he had heard for the recommitment. If a right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Pitt) would rise and state that he had new clauses to propose in the Committee, or if any other hon. Gentleman would make a similar declaration, he should certainly vote for the recommitment. Independent of such a declaration he really had heard no ground laid against proceeding to the consideration of the report. He was the more inclined to this opinion from seeing the candid desire of his Majesty's Ministers to make every fair concession (*here there was a general laugh*). He thought the question quite important, and that the time of the House would be much more usefully employed in proceeding to the discussion of the report.

Mr. Pitt, in explanation, stated, that he had been misunderstood by the hon. Member. He seemed to conceive that he was for the recommitment of the bill, whereas he was against it. Whatever the principle of the hon. Gentleman's absence was, if he had been in his place he would have seen that the clauses which he wished to introduce, were not now wanting from any deficiency on his part in proposing them, but from his inability to persuade the House to adopt them.

Mr. Windham rose, he said, to trespass on the attention of the House but for a few moments, although before he came down to his place that day he meant to enter very much at length into the merits and tendency of the volunteer system, and particularly to reprobate two clauses which had found their

their way into the bill under consideration, and which excited his astonishment in common with that of every man who valued good faith and justice towards the volunteers. Those clauses, however, having been abandoned by the framers of the bill, and the discussion having taken a turn extremely singular in this stage of the proceeding, a discussion which would more properly belong to a Committee, he felt that he could not enter upon the consideration of the general measure without great disadvantages. He therefore waved for the present the full delivery of his opinions upon the subject, the more particularly as he could not but observe that the attention of the House was nearly exhausted. He, however, could not forbear to say, in contradiction to the sentiments of the learned Gentleman on the Treasury Bench, that he conceived it quite impossible to investigate the merits of the volunteer system, which comprehended above three fourths of the public force, without also taking a view of the other means of our defence, to ascertain how far those means were correspondent to each other, and calculated to act efficaciously together. This was a question, in his judgment, of infinite importance, and demanding the most attentive inquiry, inasmuch as it was the commencement of a system, the effects of which would grow on us every day, for the more we advanced in such a situation, the more difficult it would be to change; and, therefore, the farther we proceeded, the stronger would the argument become which was relied upon so much that night, namely, that we had gone too far to recede. For this reason it was his anxious desire, that we should stop, as soon as possible, the progress of a system so defective, so radically inefficient. When arguing against this system, he wished to correct an error that seemed to prevail in the minds of some Gentlemen, that he and others who joined with him meant that the volunteers should be disbanded. Nothing could be more erroneous than this idea, for on the contrary, the principal objections which he and the Gentlemen with whom he acted had to this measure, and which he hoped would not be considered inconsistent, were these, that it would produce the dissolution of the greater part of the volunteers, while it would go to render the volunteer system permanent. — With respect to the motion immediately before the House, he would admit the justice of the remark, that new clauses might be proposed and adopted without recommitting the bill; but yet he was for going into the Committee, and for this plain reason, that a Committee was the natural and proper

per place to discuss such clauses. An hon. Gentleman (Mr. Sheridan) had urged that it was unnecessary to go into the Committee, as Ministers had manifested such candour as left no doubt of their readiness to accede to any necessary amendment that might be proposed in this stage of the bill, and the hon. Gentleman had taken occasion to observe, that it was a wonder that candour in a Minister should excite surprise in the House, as the quality was rather new; but might it not be the case, as he suspected it was, that the surprise which the hon. Gentleman perceived in the House, did not arise from the circumstance that candour was a new quality in a Minister, but that such a compliment from such a quarter was new? not the fact stated, but the stater provoked the general smile upon which the hon. Gentleman had remarked. The hon. Gentleman, however, had probably experienced such candour in his Majesty's Ministers, in return for the candour which he had shewn toward them for some time back, as justified, in his mind, the compliments he appeared so strongly disposed to pay them. Reverting to the motion before the House, Mr. Windham stated, that in order that the imperfections of the measure might as far as possible be diminished, he would vote for the recommitment.

Colonel Bastard maintained that the volunteer system did not militate so much as its adversaries asserted against the progress of the ballot for the militia, &c. As a proof of this, he stated that in the militia of the county to which he belonged (Devon), where volunteer corps were very numerous, the regiment of militia was not only complete, but had many supernumeraries, although not more than ten guineas bounty had ever been given; and he was confident that if any men were wanting for that body, they could be had from among the volunteers themselves, whose spirit, zeal, and military habits naturally disposed them to enter, if necessary, into regular military service. With respect to the efficacy of the volunteers for the defence of the country, he referred to the speech of that gallant officer, that high military authority, Earl Moira, who declared at the Highland Society a few days since, that with the volunteer force of Scotland, combined with the few regular troops in that country, he would undertake to defend it against any attack of the enemy. This opinion, with that of many other general officers of high character, was quite sufficient to satisfy his mind of the fallacy of the objections so often urged against the utility and strength of the volunteers. As to the
 opinion

opinion respecting an armed peasantry, he was not at all inclined to dispute it; but he would ask, how did the volunteers stand in the way of an armed peasantry? (*A cry of hear! hear!*) It did not appear to him that they did. On the contrary, he said that they might be of the highest advantage to prepare, to direct, and to render that peasantry effective. Nothing was more delusive, however, than the assertion, that we had not any means of employing our peasantry in the event of invasion; for the fact was, at least in the part of the country with which he was acquainted, that the name of almost every man who was capable of service was enrolled, and his part in such a case assigned to him. Some were appointed to be pioneers, some to be guides, and others to convey provisions, &c. &c. He was confident, from the spirit generally prevailing, that any of those men would be ready, in the hour of necessity, to fill up any deficiencies that might occur in the ranks of the volunteers, or the regular army. From this statement he maintained, that the opinion was incorrect, that our peasantry could not be useful when danger should approach us—that they would not know what to do.

Mr. T. Grenville vindicated himself from the charge of inconsistency which seemed to have been thrown out against him by the learned Gentleman on the Treasury Bench. That he should not have attended all the stages of a measure which struck him to be so radically bad that nothing could be extracted out of it, was perfectly natural. Indeed, the embarrassment, confusion, and wavering which even the framers of this bill seemed to feel about it, was enough to forbid any dispassionate man from supposing it probable that it would produce the good expected from it by some Gentlemen; yet as these framers were determined to press the adoption of this bill, it was desirable to remove the defects pointed out by his honourable Friend (*Mr. Fox*), and to which no kind of reply had been made, and also to introduce the other amendments suggested; therefore he should vote for the motion for recommitment.

Mr. Sheridan, in explanation, stated that if any Gentleman had a clause to propose which could not be introduced into the bill without going into a Committee, he would vote for the motion, but not otherwise.

Colonel Calcraft said, that if the House should go into the Committee he would there feel it his duty to propose a clause respecting the grant of additional pay to the volunteers,
and

and also a further allowance for cloathing. This was a proposition which he thought the hon. Gentleman who spoke last would approve of, and which, consistently with his own declaration, would induce him to vote for the recommitment of the bill.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* observed; that the recommitment of the bill was not necessary, in order to enable the hon. Gentleman to propose the clause he alluded to, as he might bring it forward in the present stage, and it might afterwards, if adopted, be referred to the consideration of a Committee of Supply.

The House then proceeded to divide, when there appeared—

For proceeding on the report immediately	173
Against it	56

Majority 117

Sir J. Wrottesley, in pursuance of what he had stated, proposed the introduction of a clause in the bill to the following effect: "That no member of any corps of yeomanry or volunteers who has been enrolled subsequent to the 22d of June, 1803, shall be entitled to the exemptions under this act, unless he has engaged to march to any part of Great Britain, for the defence of the country in case of invasion, or the appearance of an enemy upon the coast."

This proposition gave rise to a conversation, rather of a desultory and irregular kind.

Mr. Secretary Yorke felt it his duty to oppose such a provision; it was however in substance by no means new. An hon. Baronet, now absent, had proposed one nearly to a similar effect, which had been very fully discussed, and the House had decided upon it. Added to this, he thought it would involve a serious breach of parliamentary faith. He augured most favourably of the spirit and patriotism of all the volunteers, who would readily come forward in the event of an attack.

Mr. Pitt thought the provision just proposed was not in any degree similar to that moved in another stage of the bill by an hon. Baronet, as the former was a clause referring to the time of offer of service only, without any reference to the extent of the service offered. His sentiments of these two propositions were materially different: he believed the House had never an idea of holding out encouragements to the extent of those in the bill, to those whose offers were for a limited

mitted service. He agreed with the right hon. Secretary, that there was little doubt of the eventual conduct of the volunteers in case of an immediate alarm; he thought they would all manfully come forward with offers of general service. But in framing an act for the regulation of these points, a distinction should be made—they should go upon the actual state of things; by that means they would in reality know what they had to proceed upon; they would have certainty in the place of conjecture, and the principle of exemptions would be rendered more rational and distinct. He thought the clause now proposed would be a considerable improvement in the bill, and as such it should have his support.

Lord Temple observed, that the service was too limited in many instances, but one he thought was particularly confined in its patriotic vote of service, that was the Somerset-house corps; the terms on which it was accepted by Government he understood to be for the defence of Somerset-house only.

Mr. Tierney stated, that whatever might have been the original foundation of the corps; it was now very generally understood that the young men had long since agreed to go to any part of the kingdom where their services might be thought necessary. In case of an invasion, he believed the only difficulty would be to keep them within the walls of Somerset House.

Mr. Dent thought that it would have been more regular for such bodies of men as were appointed to defend a particular building, if they had been sworn in as constables. The right hon. Colonel (*Mr. Tierney*), he understood, had also the command of a corps in the borough of Southwark. If the service of that corps was limited also, he would be glad to know what the right hon. Gentleman would do with his corps in the borough at the time that he was locked up in Somerset-house for its defence—how would he divide himself?

Mr. Tierney explained to the House what was the nature of his situation with respect to the Southwark volunteers. He had been first appointed to the command of the Somerset-house volunteers. He had afterwards accepted of the command of the corps in the borough only as a matter of form, that he might have power to assist in its foundation, and whenever his presence was necessary with the Somerset-house corps, he would resign his command in the other.

Mr. Sheridan noticed the species of indoor service which the

the clerks of the Navy Office had voted; it plainly shewed that they were determined on keeping possession of Somerset-house as long as they could. In this laudable intention of theirs he had good reason to hope they would not meet with any discouragement from the example of their colonel, as there could not possibly be any doubt of his sincere desire to keep the public office committed to his charge from falling into the hands of any enemy.

Mr. Fox adverted to the original design of Ministers to proportion the number of volunteers by a regular system of six times the amount of the old militia. That measure would operate very differently in the inland counties from what it would in the counties of Kent, Essex, &c. The Somerset-house corps he thought it perfectly ridiculous to call volunteers, under such a limited agreement of service, particularly as they were servants of the Crown; he thought that more should be expected from their loyalty than a bare defence of the particular building by which they got their bread.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* enumerated several counties in which the return of the volunteers accepted by his Majesty, far exceeded the quota which had been mentioned by an hon. Gentleman opposite him.

Mr. Canning observed, that that was an additional proof, if any could be wanting, of the indecision and inconsistency of his Majesty's present Ministers, as he knew it to be a fact, that the first proportion of 6 to 1 was rigidly adhered to, until by repeated applications from people in these counties, Ministers were prevailed on to alter the plan they had originally adopted; but even then the numbers which they accepted of, were considerably short of what might be raised.

After a few other observations, the question was put, and there were

For the amendment	37
Against it	79

The report was ordered to be brought up again the next day.

Mr. Pitt said that as he understood it was the intention of some of his Majesty's Ministers to bring forward a measure that would have a similar tendency to that of which he had given notice, he would, with leave of the House, agree to wait for any reasonable length of time, in order to see how far their measure would go.

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The other orders of the day were disposed of, and the House adjourned at half past two in the morning.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

TUESDAY, MARCH 20.

The House resolved itself into a Committee of Privileges, and Lord Walsingham having taken the chair, the consideration of the claim of Lady (Henry) Fitzgerald to the barony of Roos or Ros was resumed, when counsel and evidence were again heard on behalf of the claimant. The further consideration of the case was adjourned till Thursday.

The House then resumed; and the Exchequer bills bill, the neutral ships bill, and a canal bill, were brought up from the Commons. They were severally read a first time.

The bills before the House were forwarded in their respective stages: these were chiefly in Committees, through which stage the Irish revenue, the Irish malt duty, the Irish countervailing duties, and the hides and tallow importation bills went, and were afterwards reported to the House, without amendment.

Some private business was then disposed of, and the House adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TUESDAY, MARCH 20.

The Exchequer bills bill was read a third time and passed.

Sir Jacob Astley moved for the following accounts, which were severally ordered:

An account of the quantity of malt exported from Great Britain to Ireland, and from Ireland to Great Britain, for six years, ending the 5th of Jan. 1804, and the duties paid thereon.

An account of the quantity of malt carried coastwise from England to Scotland, and from Scotland to England, for the same period, and the duties paid thereon.

An account of the quantity of beer exported from Great Britain to Ireland, and from Ireland to Great Britain, for the same period, and the duties paid thereon.

An account of the quantity of malt charged with duty in England and Scotland for the same period.

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An account of the quantity of malt charged with duty in Ireland, for the same period, with the rate and amount of the duty thereon.

An account of the quantity of strong beer, table beer, and small beer, charged with duty in Great Britain, for the same period.

Mr. Whitshed Keene moved for a list of public accountants, the process against whom had been controlled or prevented under the 39 and 40 Geo. 3. which, after a few observations from Mr. Vanittart, was ordered.

An account was presented from the Exchequer, of the payments to, and charges on, the consolidated fund, which, together with some other accounts, were ordered to lie on the table, and to be printed.

The statute duty bill was read a second time, and after a few observations from Mr. Curwen, Mr. G. Vanittart, Mr. H. Lafcelles, and Lord W. Russell, was committed for Friday, with an understanding that it should stand over till after the recess.

Mr. W. Dundas brought up a bill for laying on an additional duty of two pence Scots, or one-sixth of a penny sterling, on every pint of ale or beer brewed at Dalkeith, in Scotland, the produce to be applied towards paving and cleansing the streets of Dalkeith. Read a first, and ordered to be read a second time the next day.

PROPERTY TAX.

Lord Temple said, the House was aware that he had given notice of a motion relative to the payment of the property tax by subalterns in the army and militia. Upon looking, however, into the act, he had found several cases stronger in point of hardship than the case of the subalterns, and he therefore thought he should do wrong to bring forward their case, without bringing forward the other cases, of equal or greater hardship. He should therefore withdraw his notice, and give a new notice of his intention to bring forward, as soon as possible after the recess, a motion upon the subject, when he should submit to the House the propriety of going into a Committee to consider of altering and modifying certain parts of the property tax act.

VOLUNTEER REGULATIONS BILL.

Mr. Secretary Yorke moved the order of the day for the further consideration of the report of the volunteer bill.

The report being taken into further consideration, most of the

the amendments were gone through, and agreed to without discussion.

On the clause imposing a penalty of 200*l.* on commanding officers making false returns,

Mr. Calcraft wished that a similar penalty might be extended to commanding officers who neglected to make any returns, as thereby a whole corps might lose their exemptions.

Mr. Secretary Yorke said, he did not know of any objection to some penalty, but he thought 200*l.* too large a penalty for what might happen to be a mere inadvertence. He was of opinion, however, that a clause upon this subject had better be proposed on the third reading.

The proviso in the clause relating to resignation, which prevented those volunteers from resigning who had entered into any special engagement to serve during a particular period, was agreed to be left out.

On the clause respecting the allowances to volunteers on being called out,

Mr. Pitt said, that as the clause stood, the guinea to which each volunteer would be entitled who came out on permanent pay and duty, was to be placed in the hands of the commanding officer to lay out the whole or part, as he should think fit, in necessaries for the use of such volunteer. Now, when he first took the liberty of suggesting to the House the propriety of improving as rapidly as possible the discipline of the volunteers, he conceived that the idea of the House was to hold out to each volunteer distinctly a bounty for so doing. It was agreed that many must make great sacrifices in coming out on permanent duty, and he did understand that the principle of giving a bounty to each individual was acceded to. But he could not help thinking that the bounty being disposed of as provided in the bill, it must operate as an impediment to any encouragement to the volunteers to come out, as the sum to be given would no longer be at the disposal of the individual to provide for his family out of it during his absence. The money was thus prevented from becoming what it ought to be, a substitute for his earnings during his absence. As to purchasing great coats and other necessaries out of this allowance, it was clear that the volunteers must have those necessaries for taking the field in case of emergency, whether they went on permanent duty or not. It was evident, therefore, that in merely holding out this inducement

to them to go on permanent duty for two or three weeks, in order to attain that state of discipline which was so necessary and important, there was not that encouragement which was adequate to the object. If they wanted the advantages which would result from the volunteers thus coming out on permanent pay and duty, the only way of inducing them to do so was to offer a bounty which would be a real sum in the pocket of each individual. It appeared to him that this provision in the bill was likely, in a great measure, to defeat the object of the clause. He then adverted to an instruction issued by Government, recommending that those volunteers who had large families likely to become chargeable to their respective parishes, should not be called out on permanent duty. The material object having been to obtain as many volunteer corps as possible on permanent pay and duty, Parliament had not only proposed to give a bounty for this purpose, but also to make provision for the families of volunteers so coming out, in the same manner as with respect to militiamen. If a large proportion of the volunteers had families, and were not, therefore, to be called out on permanent duty with the rest of their corps, it might have a very bad effect upon the force of the country, as, in case of their being called out upon actual service, when perhaps one-third, or one-half, or two-thirds of a corps had been for three weeks upon permanent duty, and the rest not, the whole might be thrown into confusion from the inferiority of discipline in the latter. Could any man suppose, that for the sake of a contingency of families becoming burdensome to a parish, those who had families ought to be prevented from attaining discipline; who having greater ties and closer connections, would be the more induced to fight for their homes, their altars, and their country? If any preference was given in composing a volunteer force, it ought to be to those having families, as from the nature of the service they were required to go only to a short distance from their homes, and only for a short period, unless called out into actual service. It did appear to him a little singular, that whilst Parliament were adopting measures for inviting all the volunteers to come out on permanent pay and duty, another system should be adopted by Ministers, and that it should be required that those having families likely to become chargeable to the parish should not be called out. He was of opinion that every volunteer ought to be invited to come out, whether he had a family or not. There was besides

besides a provision made for their families, in the event of their absence; and at any rate, the clause in the act and the system adopted by Ministers were utterly inconsistent.

Mr. Secretary Yorke contended that the guinea ought not to go indiscriminately into the pockets of the volunteers, as, though there might be several industrious men with families, who might wish to appropriate the money to the use of their families, yet there were others who might probably lay it out in procuring those indulgencies which were not very consistent with the character of a soldier. Many inconveniences might likewise arise from volunteers having the money given to them to spend in a town where there might be other troops. The money besides would of course only be laid out in necessaries, if the volunteer stood in need of them; if, on the contrary, he came provided with them, the commanding officer might immediately pay the money to him, and at any rate would be accountable to him for it by law. As to the instruction issued by Government, it was merely a recommendation to avoid as much as possible placing on permanent pay and duty those volunteers who had families which were likely to become chargeable to the parish. He knew that much inconvenience had arisen last autumn from taking men from their families to a distance on permanent pay and duty, as they frequently returned with habits not very congenial with industry. The only object of the instruction, in short, was to inform commanding officers that they were not obliged to take with them on permanent duty every man of their corps, but that they might, and were recommended to leave those behind who had families which would be left without support.

Mr. Wilberforce contended, that the situation in which a volunteer stood could by no means be fairly compared to that of a soldier or a militiaman, who were each of them compelled to serve. The regulation for providing them with necessaries should not, therefore, be enforced with the same rigour. If married men were not to be called out for improvement in discipline, as well as persons without wives or children, he thought that the whole force of the volunteer army would be broken up in fragments by the admission of different plans for regulating the conduct of two classes of men, which in fact ought to be considered as one in the general character of volunteers.

Mr. G. Rose mentioned two corps in the part of the country in which he lives, one of which has two-thirds of the amount

amount of its effective force married men; the other has one-half of its number persons of the same description. Several of them were in such circumstances as made their families feel the inconvenience of their absence very severely. He thought it his duty, whenever such a case came before him as a magistrate, to grant relief, even though they should not be out of the parish in which they lived, for they might as well be in Devonshire if their families could not afford the loss of their industry. He would however hope that, if the right hon. Secretary wished to keep such a body of men together at all, he would alter his instructions, and allow them to receive the same discipline as the other men, as he was well convinced that, notwithstanding their confined circumstances, it would wound the feelings of a very great body of men, who might perhaps by that means become entirely disgusted with their situation.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* admitted that if the instructions which had been so much referred to were mandatory on Lord Lieutenants of counties, or commanders of volunteer corps, they would have furnished the subject of very grave and solid objection; but his right hon. Friend had satisfactorily shewn that they did not bear any such construction. The discretion both of the Lord Lieutenants and the commanders of volunteer corps was by no means restricted as to the number of those under their command to be called out on permanent duty. It was merely held out to be a desirable object, that where a whole corps might not be called out at the same time, those whose services were not in the first instance to be called for, should consist of individuals who, having large families, would be doubly chargeable on the public. In this arrangement he saw nothing which could afford the slightest room for censure. A great deal had, indeed, been said of the bad consequences which would result from this measure, from the inequality of discipline which it would create. But when Gentlemen urged these arguments, they ought to consider what was the present situation of the volunteers. They had already reached a certain point of discipline, which would prevent the inconvenience alluded to. They had not their business to learn, though he would not deny that greater perfection of discipline was highly desirable. There were many of the most respectable corps in the kingdom where the whole corps did not go out to drill at the same period. This was particularly the case with the City Light Horse, in which, however, there was

was no appearance, when assembled as a body, of any want of discipline, or of regularity of evolutions. The discretion of the commanding officer in each particular corps furnished the best security against any inconvenience which might arise, and the best cure for any evil which might occur in carrying the measure of calling out the volunteers into effect. He thought that to give the volunteers the allowance in necessary articles was by far the preferable mode. By giving the men the whole guinea, to be used at their discretion, the greatest inconveniences might arise. During the period allotted to exercise in discipline, they might have the means of launching into dangerous excesses, and instead of returning in a state of improvement, they would return worse soldiers and less valuable men. On these grounds he thought that the clause ought to stand in its present form. The experience of the last autumn, when twenty-four thousand volunteers were put on actual service, convinced him that by the discretionary power the clause granted, the great object in view would be fully attained.

Mr. Kinnaird stated, that as far as his experience went, he had no reason to think that the corps put on actual service in Scotland had received the guinea, the distribution of which had occasioned so much discussion. As to the great coats which had been so much spoken of, he must be permitted to say, that in that part of the kingdom with which he was connected they were not held in any great request (*a laugh*). By others they might be thought luxuries; and if men, from the prospect of getting great coats, could be induced to come out with more alacrity on actual service, it was highly proper that they should be provided. If a guinea was wanting to procure necessaries, every dictate of policy suggested that such a sum should not be withheld. If a guinea was to be given as a bounty, he hoped that this would not be given to volunteers serving in their respective towns, but that words would be introduced into the clause, directing that the guinea should not be paid, unless to those volunteers who marched from their homes. At all events, he trusted that no means would be left unemployed to complete the discipline of the volunteers. He confessed that he had heard with much astonishment an assertion of the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the volunteers had not now to learn their business. For his own part, he would not, as some people were disposed to do, affirm that the discipline of the volunteers was altogether neglected. He knew that many corps had

had made great progress in discipline ; but to hold out the idea that any officer, non-commissioned officer, or private in any volunteer corps had not much to learn, was nothing short of a most unjustifiable attempt to impose on the public. He must set his face against such a doctrine ; for, if it were acted on, the country must be exposed to the most dreadful dangers. He knew what the volunteers would do if perfected in their discipline ; and therefore he should support every measure which had in view the encouragement of as great a number as possible of them to enter for a time on actual service.

Mr. Yorke said, it was owing to a mistake that the corps in the north did not receive the guinea when they were called out last year ; but it certainly would be paid, and the commanding officer would have to lay it out according to his discretion in purchasing necessaries for the men, returning the overplus to them.

Mr. Sturges Bourne was in favour of an explanation of the clause, by which, in its present form, no part of the allowance to be given to volunteers entering on permanent duty was to be paid in money. He conceived that it was quite impossible to deny that this was in fact a direct attempt to nullify the whole clause. The clause was formed for the express purpose of holding out encouragement to offers of immediate service ; yet on the very 7th of the present month, after the clause was introduced, the Secretary of State had issued instructions that the guinea should be applied solely to the purchase of necessaries, and among the rest of great coats for the individuals entering on duty. The volunteer was to receive no compensation for his loss of wages ; but in return he is to be furnished with a great coat ! But how is it that he is to be furnished with this necessary ? He could state that the price of a great coat was from 22s. to 23s. ; that in many instances the price was greater, and in no case was it less than 16s. Independent then of the great coat, what inducement had the volunteers to enter on permanent service ? Why they absolutely had none as the clause at present stood. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, however, seemed now to think that the volunteers had got discipline sufficient, and that the additional exercise, which, in the first instance, the clause was framed to encourage, was really altogether unnecessary. He had told the House in direct terms, that they had learnt their business, and that therefore there was no use in giving them any additional allowance to encourage

encourage them to greater accuracy in their military evolutions. The fact was, that this statement was totally incorrect. Gentlemen would see a great approximation to perfection of discipline in the corps of the metropolis; but this was no criterion for the discipline of the volunteers throughout the country. He could state from his own personal knowledge, that very many of them were backward in their discipline, though this arose from no fault on their part. It was but lately that they had received their arms, and still more, lately that they had been supplied with ammunition. The season of the year had likewise prevented their exercise, and it was now, when a clause was introduced to encourage their entering on actual service for a short time, that Ministers again throw obstacles in the way of so important an object. In their justification, they had contended that as twenty-four thousand volunteers entered on permanent duty without receiving the guinea now proposed to be given, the same zeal would make its appearance at the present moment. The truth of this inference he could not for a moment admit. He begged the House to consider the difference of circumstances. At that time Ministers held out to the volunteers and the country, that a most formidable attack was daily menaced by the enemy. But what was now their language? The House heard, only a few days since, of the idle panic of invasion, of the Mosquito fleet of the enemy, of the impracticability of making any descent on our shore. It was not easy to believe that without some inducement the volunteers would now therefore come forward with the same degree of alacrity which they had formerly displayed. They would be ready, if a landing of the enemy took place, to fly to their posts and repel the invader. They would not, however, enter with cheerfulness on actual service now, unless they got a compensation for their loss of wages and their labour. The allowance of a guinea did give them that compensation, and therefore he should certainly support any proposition for giving the allowance in money. The hon. Member concluded by shewing that there was no analogy betwixt the guinea expended in necessaries for the regulars and militia when entering on actual service, and the guinea to be allowed to the volunteers. In the one case the service was compulsory; in the other it could not be forced, and it was to hold out encouragement to volunteers to undertake it, that the guinea was to be afforded.

Mr. Osborne concurred in the same opinion.

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Mr. Pitt said, if he had understood the instructions sent round by the Secretary of State according to the construction now put upon them, he would not have troubled the House about it, but certainly that was not the way in which they were generally understood. He was perfectly satisfied with the explanation he had heard, and should act accordingly ; but he submitted, whether it might not be proper that some means should be taken of informing others who might have understood the instructions as he had done, and who had not the advantage of hearing the explanation which had been given. He would not say any more upon that subject, but he wished to do away a misconstruction which had been put upon what had fallen from him. It had been represented as if he wished that the guinea should be given to the men as soon as they were called out, in order that they might spend it in drunkenness and debauchery. He had never said that he wished the money to be paid to the man as soon as he was called out. It might be paid to him after the time for which he was called out was expired, or it might be paid to him in different portions during the time he was out. He should therefore propose that the money should be paid to the men within one month after they were called out, or sooner, if the commanding officer should judge necessary. It had been said, that it was always intended that the money should be laid out in necessaries, and particularly for great coats ; but this could hardly be the case consistently with the other provisions of the bill, because it was proposed that the man should only receive a proportion of the guinea; according to the time he was out, for instance, seven shillings for one week. , But if the money was to be laid out in the purchase of a great coat, it would not be very easy to purchase a great coat, which would cost at the lowest 16s. out of seven shillings, and to pay the overplus to the man. In the case of invasion he did not think the money ought to be paid in the first instance to the men, because then they were called out compulsorily, and for an unlimited time ; but the case was very different when it was an object to induce men to go out in order to improve themselves in their discipline.—*Mr. Pitt* concluded with moving an amendment to the clause, the object of which was, that the commanding officer should pay the guinea to the man within one month after he was called out on permanent duty, or sooner if he should judge necessary.

Mr. G. Vanfittart opposed the amendment.

General Maitland suggested a difficulty, that individuals in want of the most essential necessaries, would not apply the money so received to the purchase of them. They would thus

thus be altogether unfit for service. Instead of improving in discipline, they would only waste their time in vice and dissipation.

Mr. P. Carwo was quite adverse to the accumulation of allowances to volunteers. We ought to depend on the zeal and energy of the people, independent of such expensive allowances. If those allowances were thus extended, the volunteer system would be a cause of the weakness, instead of the consolidation of the strength of the country.

Mr. W. Dundas conceived it to be highly necessary, that the money should be paid to the men as an inducement to them to go upon permanent duty; and as to the objection which had been made, that the men might want necessaries before the expiration of the month, there was nothing in the amendment of his right honourable Friend, that would prevent a part of the money being advanced before the month was expired.

Mr. Hobhouse supported the clause as it stood. The object of it was by means of a bounty to induce the volunteers to assemble and perform military duty, with a view to improve them in discipline. It was contended, that if the guinea, or any part of it, were given, not in money, but in "necessaries," it was absurd to talk any longer of a bounty. But he (*Mr. H.*) thought that there was no force in this argument. If a great coat, which in inclement weather was useful to a soldier, or any other necessary were purchased for a volunteer, it was his own property, and in that sense it was as much a bounty, as if the value of it were given in coin. It should, also, be recollected that a bounty in specie would soon be spent, and soon forgotten; whereas the volunteer, as long as any serviceable article of cloathing lasted, would be constantly reminded of the generosity with which he was treated by the state. He was, therefore, for giving the guinea, either the whole, or in part as occasion might require, in necessaries, because such a disposal of it was not only a bounty, but a more durable species of bounty, with the addition of this advantage, namely, that by assisting in the equipment for the field, it tended to promote the very object of the clause, which was introduced for the sake of perfecting the volunteer corps in discipline. His right hon. Friend below him (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) had observed that, the guinea being given on the day of assembling, it would be expended in drink and other improper methods; and until the last shilling was gone, rarely a man would be seen on the parade. To this remark the right hon. Gentleman under the gallery (*Mr. Pitt*) had replied, that it was not

his plan to bestow the guinea on the first day of assembling, but it might be given either in parts during the time they were embodied, or the whole might be kept back until the stated period of the service was expired. Did this answer remove the objection of his right hon. Friend? Far from it. It was sufficient for the individual that he knew he was to receive a guinea before he returned home. If it were paid to him the first day he made his appearance on parade, he would deposit ready money for his conviviality and jollity; if his receipt of it were postponed, he would spend it by anticipation, and be jovial upon credit. For this reason he thought that the right hon. Gentleman had not been successful in repelling the observation of his right hon. Friend, an observation to which there was no answer, and which seemed to have been received by the House with all the weight which it deserved. He concluded with expressing a hope that no alteration in the clause would be allowed.

Mr. H. Lascelles approved of the amendment, and contended that it would not prevent the commanders of corps from laying out the money in the purchase of necessaries for the men if it was applied for. It was really impossible that men could be expected to come out unless they had some compensation for their loss of time.

Mr. Hiley Addington opposed it. He acquainted the House, that in the corps which he commanded, the whole expence of the dress was not more than twenty-three shillings. To induce the men cheerfully to wear this dress, the officers were dressed similar in all respects. It was not true that great coats cost twenty-three and twenty-four shillings. In the corps he had the honour to command, the great coats, which were very strong, warm, and serviceable, cost only thirteen shillings. Great coats and other articles must be procured for corps, and he thought that in no way could the allowance of the guinea be better applied.

Mr. Canning said, that the guinea which was to be allowed to the volunteers who offered their services for permanent duty, had been very improperly, in his opinion, compared with the marching guinea allowed to the regulars and to the militia. With regard to the latter, when they were ordered to march, it was not optional in them to march or not, they were bound to do it; but the case was very different with regard to the volunteers. You could not compel the volunteers to offer their services for permanent duty, and therefore the guinea was given to them as an inducement to them to go out. It then became necessary

sary to consider whether it would be a greater inducement to a man to tell him that the guinea must at all events be laid out in necessaries for him, or to give him his choice to have either the money or the necessaries; because the commanding officer was not restricted by this amendment from laying out the money in necessaries, if the man wished it. But it seemed to him absurd to contend that the money must be laid out in necessaries, and particularly in great coats. Suppose a man was only out a week, in which case he would be only entitled to seven shillings of the guinea; such a man, he supposed, instead of a great coat, would only have a spencer. If he was out only a fortnight, then he would have a spencer with one skirt; and if he staid the whole three weeks, then he was to have a whole great coat. It had been said, that there were many articles which it was absolutely necessary that these corps should have; and it was asked, "Who were to pay for them?" His answer was, "The Public." If the services of these men were essential to the public safety, these articles should undoubtedly be furnished at the public expence.

The *Secretary at War* defended the clause as it originally stood in the bill, and thought the amendment unnecessary. He said that upon the general observations which had been made upon economy, the question stood thus: Whether the volunteer who went out on permanent service was to be allowed the great coat and other necessaries, and also the marching guinea? If this was intended, then Gentlemen should come forward, and avow this as their intention, for their arguments went to that extent, although they had never yet avowed it. The only question in reality was, whether it was advisable that a volunteer who came thus forward upon permanent duty, should have the bounty in money or in a number of necessaries to be provided for him according to the discretion of his commander; which of these two modes was likely to be the most effectual and truly beneficial to the corps who should come out? He was of opinion that providing the volunteer with these necessaries was likely to be the most effectual and beneficial for the volunteer, and for that reason he was in favour of the original clause and against the amendment; and he illustrated this by observing, that an individual volunteer when called out on the sudden, might be at a loss to procure at once those necessaries of which he might be in need, and he might be made to pay extravagantly for them; whereas the commander, by buying a great number together,

together, might have them at a cheaper rate, and the man would in this case be sure to be provided with them at all events, whereas if he had the money, he might be placed in a situation in which he might not have them at all. Nor was this any hardship at all on those who were completely equipped, for in that case they would have the guinea, for it was a bounty at all events to be advanced to every volunteer who thus came forward upon permanent duty.

Mr. C. W. Wynne thought it was necessary the volunteers should be provided with what would render their services efficient; but he did not know if it was the opinion of military men that great coats were absolutely necessary.

General Grosvenor said, he never was an advocate for this guinea at all: it was one out of two guineas to be allowed to the volunteer, and he should vote for its being laid out as proposed by the original clause, and not as proposed by the amendment.

Mr. Rose thought the principal object to be considered was, that which was most likely to operate as an inducement with men to come forward upon permanent duty, and make themselves better fit to meet the enemy by superior discipline to what they possessed at present. In that view of the case, he was inclined to think, that the guinea would have a better effect, generally speaking, than the cloaths, and that determined him for the amendment. He ridiculed the idea of *Mr. H. Addington* respecting cheap cloathing: he could have wished, if these ideas had been correct, to know the direction of the right hon. Gentleman's tailor: but the truth was, the expence of cloathing had been much understated, for he knew from an inspector general of a district, who was as great an enemy to foppery as any man in the service, that the lowest penny at which a volunteer's cloathing could be purchased was thirty-two shillings. He answered the objection to this guinea being a bad precedent in the way of pay to the volunteers, by observing that it was not in the nature of pay, but bounty.

Mr. Jeffery reprobated the idea of great coats at such a low price as had been mentioned by a right hon. Gentleman (*Mr. Hiley Addington*). The volunteers he was acquainted with would be ashamed to accept of any such thing. In a corps with which he was particularly connected, on their being called out on permanent duty, some, on whose discretion they could depend, got the guinea at once; others, who had families, were paid five, six, or seven shillings at a time. He had the pleasure of declaring, at the same time, that

that while they were out not a single man had been found either drunk or disorderly in any respect (*a loud cry of heard hear!*).

Mr. Kinnaird, was of opinion that the clause as it stood in the bill entrusted too much to the discretion of commanding officers, that difficulties might arise from the vagueness with which it was expressed. What were reckoned necessities in one sense might not be reckoned so in a military point of view. In law, a volunteer, he thought, might have an action against his commanding officer, as the bill now stood, for providing him with a great coat in place of giving him the money, as a great coat in a military view might not be reckoned a necessary. The hon. Gentleman begged leave to advert also to two other ambiguities which he wished to be explained, whether the guinea was to be allowed for the first time only of being called out on permanent duty, and whether the sum to be voted by the clause was two or three guineas?

Mr. Butler professed himself a friend to economy. Had Administration attended more to this object during last war, the country, he thought, would have felt the benefits of it at the present moment. If the guinea was laid out in necessities for the men, he thought it would be usefully spent; but if not laid out in necessities the reverse would be the case. But he objected to the amendment proposed on another ground: after the first guinea had been given, they might not improbably be called on for another to supply those very necessities that were at present reckoned unnecessary, and of which a great coat might not unlikely be the first. He did not wish us to be more expensive than necessary in the present contest. He did not wish us by any species of extravagance to sink under the weight of that arm which we had raised up for our defence.

Mr. Fonblanque did not think it at all proper that the commanding officer should have it in his power to dispose of the guinea at his discretion. At all events, if the guinea was intended as an inducement, he did not think that this mode of disposing of it had any tendency to encouragement. He did not think the great coat, which had been so much talked of, was the only necessary. If the principle on which that clause was founded was of any value, it was in so far only as it operated as an incentive to the alacrity of the volunteers; but the proviso with which it was attended, he meant the discretionary power of disposing of it lodged in the commanding officer, we t_o destroy its primary tendency.

The question being put, a division was called for, when the numbers appeared,

For Mr. Pitt's amendment	-	39
Against it	- - - - -	73

Majority 34

Several other clauses were then agreed to without opposition.

On the clause respecting the number of days necessary to attend drill, a conversation took place between Mr. Lascelles, Mr. Secretary Yorke, Mr. Rose, Mr. Nicholas Vansittart, Mr. Pitt, Mr. Wynne, and several others, when it was agreed to as an amendment, on the motion of Mr. N. Vansittart, that no abatement should be allowed to masters on account of the absence of servants on days of drill, if the period of absence did not exceed four hours; but that an abatement should be made in proportion to the duration of absence above the four hours.

Upon the clause respecting the payment of apprentices for attendance at drill, Mr. Calcraft and Mr. Kinnaird spoke against it. It was, however, agreed to, with an amendment proposed by Mr. Yorke, exempting from the operation of the clause, the apprentices belonging to the masters of merchant ships, or any trading vessels.

A conversation arose upon the clause which goes to enable the commanders of volunteer corps to arrest volunteers for misconduct while under arms, in which Mr. Pitt, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Bragge, and Mr. Giles, took part; and it was at length agreed that this clause should stand thus—"That volunteers should be subject to arrest by their commanding officers for any misconduct committed while under arms, or while armed and accoutred on their progress to any place of exercise or assembly of the corps."

In the course of the discussion of this amendment—

Mr. Dent rose to call the attention of the House to a letter which he held in his hand, and which he had received in consequence of the notice he had taken in the course of the debate of the preceding evening of the Somerset-house corps of volunteers. Upon this subject, the hon. Member observed that he was not then determined whether he should proceed for a breach of privilege; but perhaps he would be enabled to collect, from the opinion of others, how it would be most proper to act, after he should read the letter which he would take

take occasion to do as a part of his speech. The honourable Gentleman was proceeding to read the letter, when

The *Speaker* stated, that unless this letter had reference to the subject immediately before the House, it would not be consistent with order to introduce it.

Mr. Tierney expressed his regret that the orders of the House should prevent the hon. Gentleman from offering any observations he might have to submit respecting the corps he had alluded to.

The report of the bill having been agreed to,

Mr. Secretary Yorke proposed the following additional clauses: 1st, To provide for the care of volunteers' arms in Scotland. 2d, To direct the manner in which clerks acting for the meeting of general lieutenancies, &c. in that country, shall be rewarded for their services. 3d, A clause which the right hon. Gentleman observed, had been left out by accident in the former stages of the bill; namely, to exempt from toll the horses of volunteers, in their progress to, or return from any place of exercise. 4th, To enable his Majesty to accept the future services of any volunteer corps, or to discontinue the services of any corps now in existence, or any part thereof; also to authorize the Lord Lieutenants of counties, or such other persons as his Majesty might think proper to appoint, to fill up and sign commissions for any such corps. 5th, That volunteers should be exempted from the horse and hair powder taxes. 6th, To declare that no Member of Parliament who should accept a commission in any volunteer corps should thereby vacate his seat. 7th, To adapt the hair-powder and horse tax exemptions to the consolidation tax act of the last sessions, by which it is provided that volunteers are to enjoy such exemptions only while they attend their respective corps. 8th, To enable the Deputy Lieutenants of counties to apportion the quota of men to be ballotted for the militia, or any other description of force, according to the number of volunteers in each hundred, parish, or place, within their respective counties.

Upon the 4th clause, some remarks were made by *Mr. Rose*; and from the reply of *Mr. Yorke*, it appeared that the appointment of volunteer officers is in future to be on the footing nearly of that of the militia, namely, that every commission shall receive his Majesty's approbation, previous to its final execution.

The *Attorney General* rose, to propose a clause to which he hoped no objection would be offered, as its only purpose was

to prevent any such riot or disturbance among the volunteers as some Gentlemen seemed so much to apprehend, and against which, although he did not think it by any means so likely to arise as those Gentlemen did, he still thought it very prudent to guard. For this he meant to provide by proposing, that the punishment of any such riot should be prompt, and with the view to that, the object of the clause he had to submit was, to take away in such cases the power which defendants had, upon indictments for misdemeanors, according to the present process, to put off their trials. The right hon. Gentleman took occasion to allude to the riot at Chester, of which so much had been said, and stated, that Gentlemen were mistaken if they imagined that because the ordinary course of law had delayed the trial of the persons implicated in that transaction, that therefore it was intended to suffer their conduct to escape legal investigation.

Mr. Canning had no objection to the nature of this clause, but submitted to the judgment and candour of the right hon. Gentleman, whether, as it proposed so material an alteration in the bill before the House, it would be right to press the discussion at so late an hour, and in so thin a House.

The *Attorney General* said, he had no wish to press the motion at present, but desired it to be understood that he would, unless his mind should change in the interim, bring forward this clause as a rider to the bill on the third reading.

Mr. Sturges Bourne approved of the principle of the clause, and wished it to be made general, and not confined to this bill merely, as he was of opinion that no good resulted from the present process of the law with respect to trials for misdemeanors.

The *Attorney General* replied, that much difficulty and inconvenience would arise in the detail, from the extension of this principle as proposed by the hon. Gentleman, and that consideration he was assured had prevented his predecessors in office from submitting the proposition to Parliament, although often suggested to them. However, if upon further examination the thing should appear to be desirable, he would apply for the assistance of the hon. Gentleman in forming a suitable measure.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed, and *Mr. Yorke* proposed that it should be read a third time on Thursday, as it was desirable that it should go through the House with all convenient expedition, in order that it should pass both House and receive the royal assent before the holidays.

Mr.

Mr. Wynne and *Mr. Canning* wished the bill to be printed, and that the third reading should be farther postponed.

Mr. Sheridan thought that time should be afforded to Gentlemen to consider the new clauses.

Mr. Yorke said, that though he had had the honour of submitting many additional clauses to the House that night, there were none of them actually new. The principle of every one of them had already been amply discussed.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* considering that any delay would be injurious that could be avoided on this occasion, as it was of the utmost importance that the bill should pass before the recess, moved, that it should be read a third time on Thursday. Ordered accordingly.

Lord G. L. Gower wished to know, whether the right hon. Gentleman (*Mr. Yorke*) had yet fixed upon any day to bring forward the motion, of which he had given a general notice the preceding day, with respect to the mode of recruiting the regular army, &c.

Mr. Yorke answered in the negative, and that he could not yet fix upon any particular day, as it would be previously necessary to call the attention of the House to the subject by a message from his Majesty.

The other orders of the day were disposed of, and the House adjourned till the next day.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 21.

Counsel were again heard respecting the appeal, *Fleming v. Abercromby*. After which their Lordships adjourned the further hearing of the case till Friday.

The bills before the House were forwarded in their respective stages; chiefly third readings. Amongst these were the Irish revenue bill, the Irish countervailing duties bill, the Irish malt duty bill, and the hides and tallow importation bill.

Several private bills were read a third time, and passed.

An officer from the Court of Exchequer in Ireland presented certain documents relative to the pending appeal cause, *Redington v. Redington*, which were ordered to lie on the table.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 21.

Dr. Gray, from the British Museum, presented the accounts voted a few days ago by the House of Commons: they were ordered to lie on the table.

The reports of the sugar warehousing bill and the expiring laws bill were brought up and agreed to, and the bills were ordered to be read a third time the next day.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer stated at the bar, that his Majesty had been waited upon with several addresses of that House, that his Majesty had received them graciously, and had been pleased to say he would give directions accordingly.

LISKEARD ELECTION.

Mr. Wm. Dundas rose in his place, and stated that the paper which he held in his hand was of so singular a nature, and that the complaint which it contained from *Mr. Huskisson* was attended with such peculiar circumstances, that he felt it expedient to consult the House what kind of motion was necessary in order to obtain the redress which the case required. A double return, or what might be considered at first sight as a double return, had been made for the borough of Liskeard, in Cornwall. The mayor of that borough had returned *Mr. Huskisson* as the Member duly elected; but, on that Gentleman's coming up to the House, he found there was a double return, and therefore could not take his seat. While this petition, therefore, went to complain of a double return, the fact was, that there was no double return, but merely a piece of parchment in opposition to this petition, purporting to be a return from the returning officer, without either the signature or seal of that returning officer, who was the mayor of the place, who had previously signed *Mr. Huskisson's* return, and therefore it was nothing more than a mere nullity. He wished to ask the House, the hon. Gentleman said, if an under sheriff should have it in his power, by illicit and unwarrantable practices, to prevent Members duly elected from coming up to the House, or to prevent the House being filled as the interests of the country required? It was for the House to consider if they would permit officers of this description to impose upon them by any arbitrary acts which went to impede the public business. The return in question was certainly not a double return; he wished therefore to know under what description of return it could properly be classed,

classed, and what were the steps necessary to be taken to obtain the redress required?

The *Speaker* stated that, according to the forms of the House, it was not certainly in the power of any Member to bring up a petition in regard to a return, unless that petition complained of an undue election. If the present petition was of that description, the hon. Member might bring it up according to the usual form.

Mr. Dundas then moved for leave to bring up the petition.

Mr. Alderman Combe wished the hon. Gentleman to explain what he meant by a mere nullity, as he did not completely understand the circumstances of the case.

Mr. W. Dundas explained. As neither the name nor seal of the returning officer was affixed to the return in question, while at the same time it purported to be a legal return, he thought it must be necessarily void, and therefore a nullity.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* was of opinion that the petition ought to be brought up. In the last election held on the 9th inst. the mayor was the returning officer, while the under sheriff of the county had issued a warrant for that election. In this election it appeared, that 20 had voted for the petitioner, and only 3 for Mr. T. Sheridan. The return of the mayor was of one nature, by which the petitioner was acknowledged as sitting Member; whereas the sheriff on the other hand had annexed a schedule, by which Mr. Thomas Sheridan is declared duly elected, but the schedule had neither the seal nor signature of the said mayor.

The petition was then brought up and read. It stated, that at the last election for the borough of Liskeard, Mr. Huskisson and Mr. Thomas Sheridan were candidates; that by the last decision of the Committee of the House of Commons, the right of election was in the mayor and burgesses of the borough, and that the mayor was the returning officer; that the mayor and twenty burgesses voted for Mr. Huskisson, and only three burgesses for Mr. T. Sheridan, and that Mr. Huskisson was therefore declared duly elected and returned; but that the under sheriff, Mr. Damon, had annexed to his return a second schedule, by which Mr. T. Sheridan was returned, but which schedule had neither the seal nor the signature of the mayor, and therefore the petitioner prayed for relief.

Mr. Pitt said, it appeared from the facts stated in the petition, that the sheriff had transmitted only one return to the Clerk of the Crown, but it did not appear to him that the House could proceed to take any steps until they had ascertained

trained the facts of the case, and the best way would be to order the Clerk of the Crown to attend with the returns. If the facts were correctly stated, there was one complete regular return, from which it appeared that the returning officer had executed no other indenture. It also appeared that the sheriff had received from somebody something that purported to be another; not from another person claiming to be a returning officer, but purporting to be another return from the same returning officer, but neither sealed nor signed by him. If this was really the state of things, it appeared to him that the sheriff had, in fact, made but one return, and that the person so returned must take his seat. But still the other candidate might adopt the regular means of ascertaining his claim by presenting a petition, the merits of which must be decided upon by a Committee. Suppose for a moment that there had been no other candidate but Mr. Sheridan, and that there was no other return but that one which was now the subject of discussion, there could be no doubt but that upon such return he could not take his seat. If then this return would have been of no use in the case only of one candidate, it certainly could be of no avail against a regular return. Upon the whole, he thought the regular mode of proceeding would be to order the Clerk of the Crown to attend with the returns, and then the House would be able to judge whether the facts were correctly stated or not.

Mr. Sheridan did not conceive that the question could come with any propriety before the House in its present shape, whether the return was considered as double or not. The question would be considered in due time and in its proper place on the 10th of next month. The right hon. Gentleman opposite (*Mr. Pitt*) might not know, perhaps, of this proceeding, or he would not, he was persuaded, have supported this measure. But he objected also to the form in which this petition was brought up. It was irregular, he conceived, that any petition should be presented by a nominee. So far as he could be supposed to be interested, indeed, he could have wished that no return had been made, as the circumstances stood. The general question he thought it was incompetent for the House to decide. The sheriff is the only person known to the Exchequer or to this House. The truth was, there was no such person known to the House as a returning officer. If he was known at all, he was known only through the medium of the sheriff, who was the person officially known to the House in cases of this nature. The hon. Gentleman

leman then put several cases in support of his argument, and one particularly in which he himself had been concerned, where the question was not in regard to right, but with respect to the conduct of the returning officer. If the sheriff had done wrong in the instance now before the House, there were other modes of punishing his misconduct, than troubling the House by irregular proceedings. But he could not help thinking the sheriff had done perfectly right. Whether it was so or not, however, would appear in proper time, as the House had already appointed the question to be tried on the 10th of next month, as he had already mentioned. It was not a question, he thought, which in its present stage was competent for the House.

Mr. W. Dundas declared that he was ignorant of the nature of the election in question, but that he had thought it his duty to submit the question as he had stated it to the consideration of the House. It was the question of right only he had put, and not who was entitled to be sitting Member. Though appointed a nominee in this business, he could not see that that excluded him from preferring the general question, which he thought deserved the consideration of the House. He wished the question to rest on the plain facts of the case, and not on the ingenuity of the hon. Gentleman, the extent of which he was sufficiently aware of. The acquiescence of the returning officer, that Gentleman had said, was not necessary to constitute a legal return. Why then did the return in question, and to which the objection was made, purport to be the return of the returning officer, while at the same time it was neither signed nor sealed by him? He must conclude, therefore, that it was a low, pitiful fraud, purporting to be what it really was not.

Mr. Sheridan observed, that the first return, which had been in favour of Mr. T. Sheridan, had been tendered to the mayor, but had been refused, and the question was, if the authority of a returning officer was absolutely necessary to constitute a legal return. He instanced a case where, between the expiration of a new charter, no authority was acknowledged, and the return was made without the authority of any returning officer.

Mr. W. Dundas was willing to admit this where there was no returning officer; but insisted, as he had formerly done, that a return purporting to be from the returning officer, and at the same time bearing neither his signature nor seal, could
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be considered in no light but as a fraud, and a wish to impose on the House.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that if this return should turn out to be as it had been stated, a mere nullity, then the House could of course immediately decide upon it; but if there were any evidence to be examined, then it must be referred to a Committee. He wished at present not to give any opinion on the subject, or prejudge it in any manner.

The motion was then agreed to.

Mr. Pitt moved, that the Clerk of the Crown should attend the next day with the returns. With regard to what had been said by the hon. Gentleman about double returns, they were cases where two persons claimed to be returning officers, but in the present case the return was not signed by a person claiming to be a returning officer, nor was it in fact signed at all.

Mr. Burroughs was of opinion that in this case there was only one return, and consequently the House could decide upon the point without referring it to a Committee.

Mr. Pitt's motion was agreed to.

A message from the Lords informed the House their Lordships had agreed to the Irish malt duty bill, and to the several other Irish revenue bills, without any amendment.

WAYS AND MEANS.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer moved the order of the day for the House to resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House to consider further of ways and means for raising a supply granted to his Majesty.

The order being read, the Chancellor of the Exchequer moved, that the account of the disposition of grants of Great Britain, presented on the 4th of March instant, be referred to the said Committee. Ordered.

He then moved, that the Speaker do now leave the chair.

The question being put,

Mr. Dent was proceeding to make some observations on the promise of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to bring in a bill to indemnify bankers and other commercial persons who had received dividends for others, by virtue of powers of attorney, from certain penalties in the property bill for not returning, as that bill required, the amount of dividends so received, &c. when he was informed by

The *Speaker*, that nothing was regular upon the present motion,

motion; except that which might be urged by way of objection to the Speaker leaving the chair.

Mr. Dent then said, that if driven to that course, he must take it, and object to the Speaker leaving the chair, until at least some explanation was given to some questions he had put to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and it was information he had a right to ask in the common course of business in that House. He said it referred to the situation of all those who acted as agents in the management of dividends, and who were so circumstanced as to demand the attention of the House, and particularly the attention of the right hon. Gentleman; for if the House should adjourn over the 5th of April, which was probable, and make no provision on this subject, those bankers and others, who had received dividends for others, would all of them be subject to the penalties in the property bill, for not returning an account of the amount of them as that bill required, for then four quarters of the tax under that bill would be due. Not one of those who had thus received dividends for others by virtue of powers of attorney, would be exempted from the penalties in the property act for not returning the amount of such dividends. The hardship of this would be enormous, for when they had an intercourse with the Chancellor of the Exchequer early in the winter, when the difficulties of conforming to the property act began to be felt, they were assured that the bill would be amended by a clause which the right hon. Gentleman intended to propose, to exempt bankers and other persons of that description from the penalties of the act, and that such clause was to be brought in soon after the Christmas recess. It was expected of the candour of the right hon. Gentleman, that such a clause would have been proposed soon after the Christmas recess, and yet the House was now about to adjourn for the Easter recess without any such provision: nor did it appear that any alteration was intended to be made in the property bill this session, as had been collected from what the Chancellor of the Exchequer said in answer to a question which had some time ago been put to him, and by which it seemed that the property tax was to be tried by way of experiment for the present year, in order that Ministers might judge whether it was a measure fit to be continued or not. There was, however, in that answer, also an assurance that the bankers and other commercial persons who had received dividends for others, and who, on account of some insuperable difficulties in the property act, had

been unable to make returns conformable to that act, should be indemnified against the penalties of it. The answer was that "they should not be liable." Now he hoped he should have an explicit answer to the question he was about to put to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, for he came down on purpose to put that question on behalf of the great body of bankers and commercial men, who were apprehensive that they should be all liable to those penalties; although it had not been their fault that they were incurred. The question was this, Whether any such clause as that which the Chancellor of the Exchequer promised to propose soon after the Christmas recess, or some other measure to that effect, was to be brought forward before the approaching Easter recess? Upon the answer which he received to that question would depend the course he should pursue on the question now before the House. The next question was equally momentous with the former, and that was,—At what period the holders of the loyalty loan were entitled to be paid off, under the provisions of the law on the subject of that loan? The act of Parliament said two years after signing the definitive treaty of peace, and that six months notice should be given. He understood that the opinion of the Attorney and Solicitor General had been taken upon this subject; but the parties concerned in that loan could not learn what that opinion was, or what was understood to be the law upon that subject; and they wished to have their doubts removed upon it by some public declaration upon which they might rely, for otherwise by the 10th of October next they would be under some difficulties; upon which subject also he wished for some explanation. It was thus he was obliged to apply to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, for without some public explanation from that right hon. Gentleman, these parties could not judge properly of the situation in which they stood.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that consistently with the forms of the House, he could hardly answer the hon. Gentleman, because no answer he could give could have any reference to the question that the Speaker do now leave the chair; however, by the indulgence of the House, he should answer the hon. Gentleman. On the first point he was perfectly satisfied that the House would think it incumbent on them to relieve the parties to whom the hon. Gentleman had adverted, from the penalties to which they might be liable under the provisions of the property bill, and the question now only was, whether it was absolutely necessary

cessary that the provision for their exemption should take place previous to the ensuing Easter recess, or might be deferred until afterwards: upon which subject it was his intention to propose to bring in a bill to remove doubts upon the subject, for the purpose of exempting them from penalties, to which by the way he believed they were not liable; but, as doubts were entertained, it would be well to remove them. In case any proceeding should be had for the purpose of recovering any of these penalties, the House in its justice would interpose and stop such proceedings. As to the second point, he was a little surprised at the question of the hon. Gentleman; he must know from his connections, that at the request of some persons immediately interested in the loyalty loan, an application was made to him for the purpose of ascertaining what was the construction put upon the terms and conditions specified in that act of Parliament; and he referred the point to the Attorney and Solicitor General. The opinion of those learned Gentlemen was communicated to Government, and a distinct communication was made to the Bank, and to that he begged leave to refer the hon. Gentleman.

Mr. Dent observed, that there was a positive promise on the subject of bankers' liability for receiving dividends, &c. under the property tax, that a provision should be made immediately after the Christmas recess. He must again repeat his apprehension of the danger of deferring it till after the 5th of April, when the four quarters will be due on the property tax. He observed, that when the bankers had waited on the right hon. Gentleman upon this subject, they declared he had treated them with great candour, by which he had been led to dismiss all doubt that the right hon. Gentleman would fulfil his promise immediately after the Christmas recess.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that a fortnight ago he told the hon. Gentleman distinctly his intention to bring forward a proposition, and of his confidence in the disposition of the House to grant it, for the purpose of protecting the persons, to whom he had alluded, from the penalties under the property bill; and if it would be any great satisfaction to them, as by the manner in which the hon. Gentleman pressed it in their behalf he apprehended it would, the measure might yet be proposed before the Easter recess. He did not affect to distrust the hon. Gentleman, but if he had a few hours for the purpose of ascertaining whether it was really

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and *bona fide* the wish of the bankers that a measure should be brought forward before the recess, he should be glad to hold a conversation upon that subject.

The *Speaker* suggested the propriety of limiting the indulgence of the House to this irregular conversation.

Mr. Pitt said, he had no desire to prolong the conversation, but he must observe, that as it was stated that these penalties had been incurred, and as it was a general opinion that the parties who had incurred them ought to be indemnified in this case, they ought to be relieved from the penalties without delay, lest a further difficulty might arise by other persons instituting suits for the recovery of the penalties under the act of Parliament. On the subject of the loyalty loan, he observed, that it had been apprehended the act of Parliament had somehow by mistake been drawn up in a manner which was not strictly conformable to the resolutions upon the terms of which the loyalty loan was contracted for; this was a mistake for which he himself was in some degree answerable, and therefore he was the more bound to take notice of it, and to do all he could to rectify the error, for it happened when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer. The resolutions of the Committee were the foundation of the bargain and contract for that loan, and if the act of Parliament happened by mistake afterwards to be drawn up in a manner that was not conformable to those resolutions, it ought to be altered, or some relief should be given to the contractors for that loan, otherwise Parliament would be guilty of a breach of faith towards these persons.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, he could assure the right hon. Gentleman that great pains had been taken to ascertain what were really the terms of the loyalty loan, and the opinion of the Attorney and Solicitor General had been had on it; however it was not possible for these learned Gentlemen to give an opinion upon any thing but the act of Parliament itself, nor was it possible for Government without further direction from Parliament, to accede to any construction upon the loan, but such as the law warranted.

Mr. Pitt said, he never stated that the right hon. Gentleman, or the Lords of the Treasury, could do otherwise than comply strictly with the act of Parliament; but what he said was, that if the act of Parliament had by mistake been drawn up in a manner not conformable to the resolutions on which, and on which only the loyalty loan was founded, that act ought to be altered, and made conformable to the resolutions
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from which it emanated; and if it were not made so conformable, Parliament would be guilty of a breach of faith towards the subscribers; and in this respect he took some blame to himself for the inadvertency.

Mr. Vanflitart, after having made every inquiry, never understood that any very serious complaints were entertained,

The House then resolved itself into a Committee of the whole House, to consider of ways and means for raising a supply granted to his Majesty.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that if Gentlemen would have the goodness to turn to the third page of the disposition paper, they would perceive that the total of grants for the naval service of last year was 9,951,378*l.* and the debt for the naval service was 8,174,711*l.* therefore the grants exceeded the debt by 1,776,667*l.* This being the case, he should have to propose that the amount of this surplus should be issued and supplied, were it not for circumstances he was about to state. In the 11th page of the disposition paper, several payments were stated and made by authority of an act of Parliament, out of the ways and means of the year, that amounted to 579,706*l.* and that reduced the surplus he had above stated, and therefore the Committee would not consider that there was really a saving to the amount of 1,776,667*l.* that was to say, that the public had expended less by that amount in the navy than the grants amounted to, for that in fact the navy debt had increased 931,659*l.* last year. Gentlemen might ask how this could be? but they would be aware, that in many instances it was wholly unavoidable, on account of what might be paid to seamen on foreign service, and which it was impossible to calculate the amount of beforehand, and that sometimes accumulated some time before it could be ascertained. Having stated several sums on this head, the sum he proposed to be voted now upon this occasion was 1,370,674*l.*—and therefore he moved, that it is the opinion of this Committee, that there be issued and applied to the service of the year, &c. the sum of 1,370,664*l.* 2*s.* 8*d.* from the surplus of the grants of the year 1803.

Lord Folkestone contended that there was a fallacy in the account, as in fact there was no surplus, but on the contrary, a deficiency. No notice was taken of the surplus of the consolidated fund. The war taxes had been estimated to produce by the 5th of January last, 4,500,000*l.* and had fallen short 2,600,000*l.* this therefore reduced the surplus appearing on the

the face of the account to a deficiency of 1,300,000*l.* He also objected to the mode of making up the account, as it could not be understood from it upon what it was the saving had arisen. It had been stated by a noble Lord on a former occasion, that the land forces amounted to 96,000; the number in the account was only 66,000, he wished to know therefore out of what fund the remaining number were paid. He saw likewise an item of 1,500,000*l.* to enable his Majesty to take such steps as the exigency of affairs might require, but there was no account how that money was expended.

Mr. Vanfittart said, the account had been made out in a similar manner from year to year, the practice being to appropriate the excess of the ways and means over the supply in aid of the supply of the ensuing year, notwithstanding there might be outstanding demands. With respect to the surplus of the consolidated fund, about 900,000*l.* remained to be made good. As to the war taxes, they were estimated not to the 5th of January, but to the 5th of April, at a produce of 4,500,000*l.* out of that however, there had been up to last week paid into the Exchequer 3,130,000*l.* There therefore only remained a deficiency of 1,370,000*l.* which it was probable might be paid in before the 5th of April, or at least reduced to a small sum. The items in the account were arranged in the usual way. As to the army, the number of forces stated on a former occasion, included various descriptions of force which could not come within this account. Of the surplus stated on the face of the account, 900,000*l.* actually remained in the Exchequer unapplied.

Mr. Johnstone begged leave to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the saving that had been alluded to arose from the strict economy of the noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty, or from any deficiency in the navy establishment?

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* replied, that the saving arose no doubt in some measure from the system of economy that had been adopted, and so happily pursued in every department of the service; but that it was to be attributed particularly to the deficiency of seamen that had been voted at an early period, and whom it was impossible immediately to collect. The fact was, had the number been raised immediately as Parliament had wished, he was persuaded there would have been no saving. But the preparation had been so great that it must be a considerable satisfaction to the House that there was such a saving as appeared on the face of

of the accounts; the preparation, indeed, had been so great, that in regard to seamen the number now in the service was only 1500 less than that voted by the House. In any point of view he would venture to compare the present state of the navy with its attitude at any period during last war, when the idea of saving had never been entertained, at least when economy did not appear to be made such an object. With what accuracy the accounts had been made out, he had only to mention as a proof, that one of the first financiers in Europe (alluding to Mr. Pitt, who was then gone) had heard them stated without offering any objection.

Mr. Tierney found no difficulty in accounting for the sums that had been saved; they were owing in a great measure, as his right hon. Friend had stated, to the seamen not having been all raised at the time when voted. Suppose 1000 men should be the deficiency occasioned by this means, reckoning each man 7l. a month, a round sum would soon be accumulated. What appeared to him extraordinary was, that the estimates had been so well drawn, that no one branch of the service required aid from another. In former cases that he had witnessed, whatever was saved in one department had been generally wanted by another. He was glad, however, to see the noble Lord (Lord Folkestone) pursue that line of inquiry, and it was desirable that people of his rank should pay attention to the expenditure of the country.

Lord Folkestone insisted that what was represented as a saving was a mere fallacy.

Mr. Vanflitter stated that the war taxes amounted to above three millions; and in answer to a question put by Mr. Fellowes, mentioned that above two hundred thousand pounds had been received from the property tax during last week.

Mr. Fellowes expressed his satisfaction that the discussion had taken place; as it gave him the highest pleasure to discover the ability, the integrity and economy of his Majesty's Ministers.

The House having resumed, the report was ordered to be received the next day.

The Secretary at War moved the order of the day for a Committee of the whole House on the innkeepers' allowance bill.

The House having resumed, the report was ordered to be received the next day.

The Committee of Supply was postponed till Friday.
Adjourned.

HOUSE

HOUSE OF LORDS.

THURSDAY, MARCH 22.

The House resolved into a Committee of Privileges, and Lord Walsingham having taken the chair, counsel and evidence were again heard in support of the claim of Lady (Henry) Fitzgerald to the barony of Ros. The further consideration of the case was adjourned till Tuesday next.

The House then resumed, when the sugar warehousing bill, and the rape seed oil importation bill were brought up from the Commons.

The order of the day being read, for the House going into a Committee on the Irish priests' and deacons' bill,

Lord Ellenborough made a variety of observations upon the subject. He referred to the animadversions which had been made by certain reverend prelates upon the bill in its present shape, when it was last in a Committee before their Lordships, and adverted to the circumstances which gave rise to the present measure. The subject was certainly one of no light importance, and he thought the public considerably indebted to the learned Gentleman who introduced the bill into the other House of Parliament. Since the period of the union, he observed, the national churches of England and Ireland were to all intents and purposes united; it was therefore essential that the law, as it regarded the points in question in both countries, should be identified. He thought it proper that the law should be clearly expressed, as it stood upon the points which were the subject matter of the bill before the House. No persons could be admitted into deacon's orders until they were 23 years of age, nor into priest's till the age of 24. After alluding to what the practice had hitherto been in these respects, in the respective parts of the united kingdom, he expressed his opinion that it should be assimilated to what the law required in other cases, which was the full completion of the age specified. His Lordship described the practice of the law upon these points; which, instead of the full absolute year, or to the very hour of its expiration, allowed one day in practice as an interval. This he illustrated by a familiar instance: suppose he were born any hour on the first of February, the law would consider the period of the year as elapsed on the earliest moment of the 31st of January. The noble and learned Lord observed, that he should propose a bill to explain and enforce the law

law clearly in these respects, and with a view to its consideration, he moved that the Committee upon the bill in question be deferred until that day month, which was ordered accordingly.

His Lordship then presented the bill to which he had alluded in the course of his speech, which was intituled "An act to enforce the due observance of the sacred canons and rubric, respecting the ages at which persons are to be admitted into the orders of deacon and priest."

This was read a first time and ordered to be printed.

The bills upon the table were then forwarded in their respective stages, and those brought up from the Commons severally read a first time. Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THURSDAY, MARCH 22.

General Tarleton presented a bill for the further improvement of the port of Liverpool. Read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time.

Mr. Dickens presented at the bar certain papers from the office of the chief secretary of Ireland, pursuant to a former order of the House. Ordered to lie on the table.

The Irish militia families' bill was passed through a Committee of the whole House, and the report ordered to be received here next day.

The sugar warehousing bill and the expiring laws bill were read a third time and passed.

The report of the Committee of Ways and Means of the preceding day was brought up. Upon the question being put, that this report be now received,

Lord Folkestone apologised to the House for again making a few observations upon this subject. He felt it his duty, however, to remind the House that the estimate which was given to the House of the produce of the war taxes up to the 5th of January last amounted to 4,500,000*l.* instead of which they had not actually produced within that period above 1,900,000*l.* There was therefore under the head of war taxes an actual deficit of 2,600,000*l.* as would appear by a comparison of the former estimate and the statement in the present account. The report which the House was now called upon to receive and proceed upon, purported to state that a surplus of 1,300,000*l.* arising from the grants of 1803,

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should be applied towards the expences of the present year. Of ten millions which the House had been led to believe would have been raised within the year, there therefore remained nearly eight millions to be raised in the last three months. At all events, without going into an examination of the merits or propriety of the general estimate, there was a fallacy upon the face of the present account, from which it appeared to him that, instead of a surplus of 1,300,000*l.* there was an actual deficit to the same amount.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* begged leave to correct an error into which the noble Lord had, no doubt accidentally, fallen, from the circumstance of his not having been accustomed to look much into accounts of this nature. The manner in which the former estimate had been given, and the usual mode of drawing up all statements of that nature, was by giving in a return of the supposed produce up to the 5th of April. The whole of the arrears of that quarter were frequently not collected till the July quarter; and, from the daily payments which were making to the revenue, he had every reason to hope that the whole amount of their former hopes would be realized. As to the general estimate of ten millions, when Gentlemen considered the alterations which had been made in the property tax, and in other taxes, he thought that they would be satisfied as to the cause of any apparent diminution in the general produce.

Mr. Gregor supported the position which had been laid down by the noble Lord; and *Mr. Vansittart* explained the manner of making up the public accounts, in nearly the same manner as had been already done by the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The question was again put, and carried without a division.

Mr. Calcraft said, he had some time since given notice of his intention to move a resolution, in a Committee of the whole House, on the subject of additional pay, and allowance for cloathing and equipment, to certain non-commissioned officers in the volunteer corps. He should defer it until after the Easter recess, and should bring it on afterwards as early as possible.

MEDIATION OF RUSSIA.

Mr. Fox—I take this opportunity of putting a question to the right hon. Gentleman opposite to me, upon the subject of an answer which he gave to me, respecting the mediation of Russia. I understood at that time there would be no general objection to giving this House information on that subject;

subject; that I understood to be said most clearly and distinctly; but that then circumstances which were not likely to be of long duration prevented Ministers from making any communication upon that subject to the House: since which time four months have elapsed. What I now wish to know of the right hon. Gentleman is, whether those circumstances still stand in the way of such communication.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer—On the 22d of November last, there were circumstances which, in the opinion of his Majesty's Ministers, precluded any communication to this House upon the subject to which the hon. Gentleman has adverted. But it was then intimated that there might be other circumstances which, in the opinion of his Majesty's Ministers, might render a communication improper, even although those circumstances which precluded any communication did not exist: and now other circumstances do exist, and they so far operate on the minds of his Majesty's Ministers as to convince them they ought not to advise his Majesty to direct any communication to be made upon that subject at the present moment.

Mr. Fox—I am often unfortunate in my recollection of the statement of facts as they usually come from the bench opposite to me, and never was more so than in the present instance, for I have not the smallest trace in my mind, nor any ground for conceiving any thing of what was said against this communication, but the circumstances which the right hon. Gentleman alluded to in the first part of his speech to-night, viz. those circumstances which then precluded his Majesty's Ministers from making any communication to the House upon that subject, and which were not expected to be of long duration; and what I certainly understood was, that afterwards Ministers would be happy to give information on that interesting subject. Not a word do I recollect as having struck my ear of those other circumstances which the right hon. Gentleman states as reasons for not making any communication whatever upon the subject. I dare say I mistake the matter, but it is a curious coincidence, that every record of the fact, as published at the time upon this subject, has precisely the same imperfection as my memory. We must, however, of course, be all inaccurate, for I must give credit to the right hon. Gentleman's explanation of what was said upon that subject, and I must now understand, what until now I never did, that other circumstances besides

those that immediately precluded Ministers from making a communication might have been looked for.

Here the conversation dropped

AYLESBURY ELECTION.

Sir George Cornwall called the attention of the House to the subject of the Aylesbury election. He said it was his intention, by way of prevention of the evils which had been felt by that election, to move for leave to bring in a bill to extend the right of election for that borough to a given district in the surrounding parts of the country. He then moved that the order of the day on this subject be now read, which was read accordingly, and which was for taking the report of the Committee upon this election into consideration.

He then moved that the report be taken into consideration the next day. Ordered.

Lord Archibald Hamilton alluded to the mode in which the civil officers of Government of Ireland received their pay, and observed, that he should bring this subject forward for discussion on some future opportunity. He wished to know whether military officers who were in this country were to be paid in like manner.

Mr. Corry referred the noble Lord to the explanation he had given upon this subject already, and also to the order that had been made upon it, which certainly related to the cases of civil officers only. If, however, the noble Lord wished to extend the order to the case of military officers, he was not aware of any objection to such a proposition; but he apprehended it must be made the subject of a distinct motion. He professed his readiness to afford the noble Lord all possible facility in obtaining ample information upon the subject, and he was glad the noble Lord had determined to bring it forward for discussion.

LISKEARD ELECTION.

Mr. Sheridan called the attention of the House to the very harsh and strong words which had been used by an hon. Gentleman opposite him (*Mr. W. Dundas*) respecting the conduct of the under sheriff of the borough of Liskeard. He really thought that poor *Mr. Damon* (rather an unfortunate name to be sure), but who, for ought he knew, might be a very respectable Gentleman, was handled very roughly by that hon. Member. He had indeed been spoken of in very favourable terms by *Mr. Child* of Liskeard, and indeed
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the testimony of the whole body of justices corroborated the statement of Mr. Child. Mr. Harry Burges, of the county of Middlesex, was so well acquainted with the whole of this affair, that he had thought it incumbent on him to address a petition to this hon. House, stating, that no deception had been practised, relating the whole of the circumstances of the case, and praying that the House would, in justice to the parties who had thus been accused, refrain from coming to any conclusion upon the subject of the late election at Liskeard, until they had an opportunity of defending themselves. This petition Mr. Sheridan presented.

Mr. W. Dundas said that he certainly ought not to be severe in any argument with the hon. Gentleman opposite him (Mr. Sheridan), as it was so well known that he never was severe himself in the course of his arguments. He then moved that the Clerk of the Crown do attend with the writ which had been issued, and the return which had been made on the last election for the borough of Liskeard.

These documents were accordingly produced and read ; and were in substance what is stated in our account of the preceding day.

The writ was directed to Thomas Rawlins, Esq. the sheriff, and the precept was issued and signed by him. From this Mr. Sheridan inferred that he was the only person whom the House could recognise in the management of the business of the election.

Mr. Pitt, however, contended that the business which the House had to attend to in the present case, was not, whether this or that person was returning officer, or which person should have been returned ; it was simply this, whether a thing which was not in unity with itself could be considered valid ; and if they determined that it was not valid, whether the addition of such an invalid instrument to one which was on the face of it valid, could constitute two valid instruments, and thereby be reckoned a return ? He then referred to an act, the 25th of the King, chap. 24. by which it was declared that, in case of a special return, or in a case where there was no return, the Speaker should send a notice to the returning officer of the State of the representation, or the non-representation of that particular place, desiring him to proceed accordingly. If the case was not authorized by the law officers of the Crown, he supposed that the House would be induced to exercise that summary power which is vested in itself in cases where their conduct is not regulated by a particular law.

Mr.

Mr. Fox explained the term returning officer ; he stated that it was to be understood in two senses, the one the officer within the particular district, and the other the sheriff of the county, who alone was recognised by that House. The Grenville act was imperative on the House, and where an undue return was complained of, it was the duty of the House to go into a Committee that the whole of the case might be fairly investigated. A petition of an extraordinary nature had once been presented to that House, which contained nothing on the face of it explaining the nature of the dispute, but as it concluded with a complaint that an undue return had been made, the House had thought it its duty to go into a Committee.

Mr. William Dundas remarked, that the case alluded to was that of the Rev. Mr. John Horne Tooke, and if the House extended its generosity to a case which involved its own dignity only, he could not conceive how that could apply to a case where there was a fallacy in the whole of the argument, on the supposition that a double return had been made. If such tricks were allowed, the whole of the seats in Cornwall might be overturned by the sub-sheriff.

Mr. C. Wynne stated that the sheriff would in such a case be liable to be sent to Newgate in the first instance, and to be sued at law in the second instance for penalties with double costs. If the House took upon itself to decide the merits of petitions, there was no telling where they would stop.

Mr. Sheridan declared that he possessed none of the soft asperity of the hon. Gentleman opposite (*Mr. W. Dundas*), he was not induced to attack a gentleman who was not present, and prevent him or his friends being heard in their own justification. Some of his harsh expressions might have come out in the warmth of debate, and he had no doubt that upon cooler reflection, if he was to see these gentlemen, he would make a very handsome apology.

Mr. Burroughs said, that, in his opinion, the law was very clear respecting the acknowledgment of a returning officer, and in support of this opinion, he read an extract from an act passed in the reign of Henry the Sixth, inferring from thence that the sheriff was the medium between the clerk of the Hancaper and the returning officer. He concluded with moving, that the deputy clerk be ordered to take the document off the file, which appeared to him to be an invalid return.

Mr. Pitt seconded the motion, but at the same time expressed a wish that some of the law officers of the Crown would declare what was their opinion on the subject. If they differed from

from him he would very readily retract, and he had no doubt that his hon. and learned Friend would be very willing in that case to withdraw his motion.

The *Attorney General* opposed the motion on this ground, that the Sheriff's name was indorsed on the back of the writ, and he therefore conceived that the question as to this double return must, according to law, be referred to a Committee.

After a few words from Mr. Deverell,

Mr. Dundas rose, and recommended to his hon. Friend to withdraw the motion. The right hon. Gentleman took occasion to disclaim any personal allusion whatever to Mr. T. Sheridan, who was interested in this proceeding, and intimated that if the hon. Member on the opposite side (Mr. Sheridan), who had thought proper to allude to his profession in the course of the evening, should again do so, he gave him warning that he would also refer to that hon. Member's former life. He should certainly pay him in his own coin. In the singular transaction which gave rise to the debate, he was willing to think that Mr. T. Sheridan was not at all concerned, but he was by no means equally ready to acquit the hon. Member.

Mr. Sheridan was not aware that any reference to the right hon. Gentleman's former profession would be disagreeable to him, particularly as it was a profession of the highest credit. He had himself served his terms with a view to follow that profession, and he was now very sorry that he had not. However, as to the hon. Gentleman's warning that he would pay him in his own coin, if his profession should be again alluded to, he did not know well what he meant. The coin he dealt in was nothing more than common sense and judgment in the exercise of his duty in that House; and he had no objection, but rather a wish, that the right hon. Gentleman would deal in the same coin. The motion being withdrawn,

A conversation arose as to this question, whether the matter as to the right of voting in Liskeard, which stands for the 10th of next month, should precede or follow the consideration of Mr. Huskisson's petition as to the double return? Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, and Mr. C. Wynne, were for the precedence of the question of right. Mr. Pitt and Mr. Bankes spoke on the other side. After some observations by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Speaker, Mr. Tierney, and Mr. Bragge, the consideration of the petition of Mr. Huskisson was appointed for the 9th of April, and the deliberation upon the right of voting, &c. at Liskeard, was postponed from the 10th to the 17th of April.

Mr. Kinnaird gave notice that at an early day after the recess

cess he should move that the non-commissioned officers of the volunteers should be allowed the same pay as those in the regulars, and that half-pay officers, &c. should receive the same as those on the staff, in the line, &c.

VOLUNTEER REGULATIONS BILL.

Mr. Secretary Yorke moved the order of the day for the third reading of the volunteer bill.

Mr. Langton adverted to what he had formerly said upon that part of the bill which related to the right of resignation, the substance of which had been adopted, and without which he was apprehensive that great discontent would have prevailed. He had now no opposition to offer to the passing of the bill.

Colonel Craufurd said, that nothing could give him more pain than the idea that he was abusing the patience of the House, except that of an apprehension that he was omitting an essential part of his duty by remaining silent on this occasion; but he should incur the risque of the former, rather than feel the consciousness of the latter. He must therefore say, that he rose once more for the purpose of expressing his disapprobation of the whole system of his Majesty's Ministers upon military matters. This subject was of the greatest importance, for surely nothing could be of greater importance, than that of considering the means of repelling the most formidable invasion that was ever threatened. Yet, for this object, in the course of seven or eight months, we had had seven or eight bills, and the present was called a consolidation of the whole of the regulations which had been before thought of, or were now thought of upon this subject. This very bill had been five or six times committed, and now contained twenty-four or twenty-five clauses, by way of amendment. Gentlemen had taken so much pains with this bill, that one would be led to hope that this system might be of some duration. He was afraid that he had already spoken so much at large upon the topics connected with this bill, that the House would not lend him a very favourable ear. He desired that the permanent military force of this country should be on a permanent basis; for without it we should not have the advantage of our strength; without it we should lose our respect in Europe, and be exposed to the fluctuation of conflicting councils, and a feverish system of policy, which had, of late, marked our measures, and would be our bane, unless it was altered. And he desired to be understood to say, that, in his opinion, it was not this system of volunteer service which was alone defective; he thought that the whole of our military system should un-

dergo a complete revision. With respect to a regular army, without which it was impossible that we should be respected by our friends, dreaded by our enemies, or secure ourselves, the means of supplying that species of force was every day becoming more and more difficult, and it was now indeed become impossible; it was impossible to recruit the army, for we were every day offering bounties to men for not going into it: we were now giving 15 guineas bounty for men going into the militia, and also finding provision for the wives and families of those who went into it; we were now giving 35 guineas bounty to those who entered into the army of reserve, and also providing that their wives and children should be supported; was it then to be expected that a man would enter into the regular army, by which he gave up his freedom for life, for a bounty of ten guineas, and that without any provision whatever for his wife or family? With respect to the militia, it did not appear to him extremely politic to increase a force of this kind so much as we had done, since it was not applicable to every part of the empire, as the regular force was. He did not see one step which Ministers took in military affairs of which he could conscientiously approve. By the measure now before the House, we should exclude three-fourths of the most effective men in the kingdom from the essential defence of it. Instead of raising a large disposable force, we were now raising a large body of men enjoying privileges and exemptions which were both oppressive and disgusting to the lower and more distressed classes of the community, and thereby throwing the burthen, which these privileged persons ought to bear, upon those who, of all the community, were least able to bear it. We were raising and establishing only an inefficient force at the best, and proposing regulations for its improvement, at the same time that Parliament was under the painful apprehension that such regulations must to a great degree be unavailing: for Gentlemen in the House who promoted this system were under the necessity of admitting that certain measures, however good in themselves, must not be tried or attempted to be carried into execution, for fear that the regulations would not be agreeable to those on whom they were designed to operate, and Ministers had said that the system of volunteer force was a delicate machine. Now he was of opinion that a machine designed for the purpose of war should not be of a delicate texture, but should be made of those hardy and tough materials that are capable of bearing the rudest shocks. He must

also say, that in every view he could take of our military system, it did appear to him not at all calculated for the welfare or the safety of this country; and that it was necessary that we should lose no time in the revision of it; and with all the speed with which we might endeavour to do this, God only knew what disaster might befall us. He thought this a delicate question, yet, he could not, on that account, pass it over. He was actuated by no personal motive whatever, but observing a system, the foundation of which was so unsafe, and the superstructure of which was in every respect so defective, it was impossible to pass it over. It might be said that he criticised these measures merely for the purpose of finding fault with his Majesty's Ministers, for he had heard a great deal said about his motives in what he had advanced, and it had been insinuated that he brought together, especially on the discussion which related to Ireland, three or four discordant facts, from factious motives, for the purpose of depressing the spirit of the people of this country; and factious motives had also been imputed to a right hon. Gentleman on the other side of the House (Mr. Pitt), who was as inflexible for integrity, as he was eminent in talent, when he brought forward his motion to inquire into the state of the naval defence of this country, and for which the public were greatly indebted to that right hon. Gentleman. Nor did he understand the propriety of these charges made against all Members of the House, who did not support the present Administration, for he did not see why integrity should be confined to the precincts of the Treasury, or of Somerset House; and why every man was to be disposed to change the opinion of the people of this country against the present Administration, who did not approve of their measures, when nine-tenths of the whole country did not think them capable of managing the affairs of the country, was what he did not understand. This was a consideration which made him indifferent as to what might be said of his motives for the part he took in the discussion of public affairs. But to return to this bill; every thing that was to be admired in it came not from Ministers, but from those who disapproved of their measures; every thing that was calculated to improve the volunteer system, and adopted by the House, was not from the aid, but in spite of the obstinacy and blindness of Ministers. What had aroused the people of this country? A conviction of their danger. But was that conviction effected by the exertions of Ministers, or rather did they not impede the progress

gress of that apprehension, by adopting a sort of Stock Exchange policy, by which they endeavoured to persuade us that a formidable invasion was not to be expected? Ministers had done every thing in their power to keep down the spirit of the people, but it was roused by the genius and eloquence of the right hon. Gentleman opposite to him (Mr. Pitt). Nothing did he find in the bill, nor in any part of the military system of Ministers, that was not brought forward by some person or other who had no connection with them, and chiefly by the right hon. Gentleman himself (Mr. Pitt). By the present bill there were now excluded from the ranks of our regular force, three-fourths of the youngest, the stoutest, and in every respect the fittest men in the country, to be employed for its safety and honour. Besides this, there were a number of men in the volunteer corps, who were the masters of families, who, if they were called out, could not long remain in their military character without a stagnation in the business of the country; add to this, that the young men who were without families, and the fittest on all accounts to be in our disposable force, were locked up in this inefficient system of the volunteer service. Having said this, he proceeded to observe, that the volunteer system rendered the ballot for any other service almost entirely useless, and he maintained that there was in this system of exemption to the volunteers, an hardship which, upon the principle of humanity, as well as policy, ought to be altered, for the heavy tax of providing substitutes fell upon the lower classes of society, who could the least afford it, and who were not in the volunteer service. He again repeated the sentiments he had delivered on the subject of an armed peasantry instead of the volunteer system, who would be a force three or four times more powerful than that of the volunteers as a war machine. He had been accused of holding language which tended to discourage the people of this country, and to encourage the enemy. He asked the House whether he had at any time said any thing that would bear that construction; and whether he had not said, that the people of England were capable of every thing that was to be looked for in a brave army, that was, every thing that was excellent? He would not say it was far beyond any other army in the world, he would say, that if it had a fair opportunity, it would answer for itself, and be equal to any upon the face of the earth; but he would not so far insult the understandings of those who composed our army as to tell them they had nothing

thing to contend with, that would be at once an insult to their understanding and their courage, for it would appear as if they knew nothing of the party with whom they would have to contend, and as if they had not courage enough to engage in the contest, without being persuaded there was no difficulty to be expected in it. On the contrary, the army of this country ought to be told the truth, a truth which would not dismay, but would animate them; that they had, or would soon have, to contend with an army which, in the opinion of every liberal unprejudiced man, who knew any thing of the matter, was as fine an army as any in Europe; that was the description which ought to be given of the army of the enemy, for that was the force with which they would soon have to contend. To tell the people of this country that they would only have to contend with miserable conscripts, was to tell them that which was not true; for certainly the army of the enemy was as enthusiastic in the cause in which they were engaged, as well disciplined, and in every respect as fit for military operations, as any army this hour in the world. And here again he must say, that the armed peasantry would be preferable to the system of volunteer force, because it would be of three or four times the physical force of the volunteers; and therefore he would say, give every peasant a pike, and there would be a more efficient body opposed to the enemy than the volunteers would be, for several reasons. The volunteers, being masters of families, could not long be spared, without ruin to the whole trade of the country; and they, partaking of the nature of an army, could, as had been formerly said by an honourable Gentleman (Mr. Fox), be met by another army: but an armed peasantry was what the enemy could never meet upon equal terms. Nor was there any objection to the armed peasantry, unless it was to be supposed that no body of men could be fit for fighting who were not dressed in red coats, and who had not been taught the Prussian exercise. Having recapitulated his objections to the volunteer system, and his reasons for preferring an armed peasantry, he noticed another point, which although not so immediately connected as some others were with the bill now before the House, yet had a bearing upon it, he meant the idea that had been thrown out of destroying our horses and other cattle, as well as provisions, when the enemy might effect a landing: besides the barbarous inhumanity of that idea, he apprehended the practice of it would be more injurious

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to ourselves than any evils which our enemies might, in the event of landing, be able to accomplish.

No one rising, and there being a loud cry of Question! Question! the Speaker was about to put the question, when

Mr. Windham rose. He confessed that he felt no surprise at the uneasiness which Ministers betrayed by their cry for the question to get rid of the measure before the House. It had certainly given them much trouble, and was likely to give them and the country much more. They might however state, as a justification for the silence which they seemed willing to preserve upon this occasion, that all the arguments used by his honourable Friend who had just sat down had been advanced before. This might be for the most part true, but he would ask, whether those arguments had ever been answered, and whether they did not remain entirely unrefuted? If so, then they ought to be repeated, in order, if possible, to persuade the pertinacious adherents to this dangerous system to yield to their force, and to resort to measures more consonant to wisdom, and more calculated to secure the safety of the country. But perhaps, Ministers had exhausted their eloquence upon this subject, and being tired of amendment and reamendment, of commitment and recommitment, of propositions and recantations, were anxious to send the measure out of the House, without any more words about it. To their wishes, however, he was not disposed to yield, and as this was perhaps the last opportunity of speaking upon this bill, he would avail himself of it to enter his solemn protest against a measure which he thought, if persisted in, would lead to absolute ruin. This sentence, however harsh, he could not hesitate to pronounce, as the full conviction of his mind. The House, he observed, had never yet taken a distinct view of this question. The point material to be considered was, not so much what had been done towards the defence of the empire, as what had not been done. By the system to which this bill referred, no one could see that any thing had been accomplished of a nature that entitled it to praise. It could not be pretended that it had raised the volunteers, for had nothing respecting it ever existed, no man could venture to assert that we should have had no volunteers. This system produced no advantage to the volunteers, while it materially injured our regular force, and threatened to entail the most extensive mischiefs on the country. It professed to have principally in view the improvement of the volunteers in military discipline.

cipline, a very desirable object no doubt; but what had the clause of exemptions to do with discipline? To expunge that clause would remove a very important objection to this bill, and it was absurd to say, that, to withdraw that bounty from the volunteers would be injurious or unjust. It might, to be sure, tend to diminish the number of the volunteers, but in return, how much would it add to the real strength of the country? The great argument used in support of this bill was, that under the present circumstances, the volunteers forming our main force for the defence of the country; their improvement ought to be the first object of our attention; but without stopping to inquire why or how the volunteers had thus become our principal force, or disputing the propriety of communicating to them every possible improvement, he would ask, whether the bill then under consideration was calculated at all to improve the volunteer system, and even if it were, whether that improvement, or any of which the system was susceptible, was not insignificant in value, compared to the price which the country was obliged to pay for it, in tolerating the existence of that system? The whole of this case, as it appeared to him, might be resolved into three propositions; 1st, whether this bill was calculated to improve the volunteer system? 2dly, whether, while we were improving this system, we were not gutting up our real military strength? and, thirdly, whether there was time enough to new-model our public force, and thus to prepare it against the dangers which menaced us? Each of those propositions the right hon. Gentleman discussed, and in his course took particular notice of the assertions so often made by the supporters of this bill—that the danger which threatened us was such that we should act as if it were certain; and that this danger was so transcendent that nothing should be put in competition with the means of providing against it. With the second assertion he fully agreed, at the same time he would not suffer his mind to be so wholly engrossed by the consideration of the means of repelling it, as to overlook the resources of our permanent security—to purchase present safety at the expence of future danger. With respect to the idea that our present danger was certain, and immediately to be apprehended, he thought the practice of those who were in the habit of repeating the assertion was at variance with their language, for it was scarcely possible to suppose that if they really thought the danger so imminent, they would content themselves with the mere passing of bills; that they would not
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call out the volunteers and put the country in a more formidable state than it now is ; that they would be so slow in their progress. After dwelling some time on the distinction between the means of our present and permanent safety, a distinction which Ministers appeared to him to overlook, the right hon. Gentleman proceeded to animadvert on the provisions of the bill before the House, which was connected with a system that he considered the beginning of a series of dangers ; and in considering this bill, the fair view to take of it was by a comparison of the dangers of the present with those of the future ; of war against war, as was said of what was called the peace of Amiens, that peace which produced the present crisis of our affairs, when we are literally prisoners in our own island, and contemplating the means not of conquering our enemy, but of preserving ourselves safe from his attack. Some Gentlemen confessed that the volunteer system was bad, but contended that we must go on, because a change at present would be dangerous. From those who made the confession he must of course expect support, if he could shew that the danger of a change was not such as they seemed to apprehend. They professed to think the country, in consequence of this volunteer system, to be placed in something like the situation of a General, who had put his army in bad array, and chosen an improper position ; and he would put it to them, whether they would deem it advisable in such General to remain in such a position after he had discovered that it was bad, until the enemy should attack him, or to withdraw his force before the enemy's approach ? or whether, if a vessel was running fair before the wind, it would not be better for the master to tack about, than by continuing his course, expose the vessel to be wrecked ? This struck him to be analogous to the effect of perseverance in the volunteer system. It might be stated, however, as it had been, that we could not tack about ; but this he denied, and insisted that the farther we proceeded the worse we should become. If any man should say that the rejection of this bill would go to dissolve the volunteers, he would tell him that consequence could not arise ; for though the system should be done away, the men would still remain. They would not be annihilated. They would indeed lose some forms, and also their fine cloaths, which by the by would be no great loss, but the heart and spirit would still be found. Like the atoms, which at the last day will be collected and embodied again, the volunteers would be forthcoming still, although their committees, the right hon. Secretary's

cretary's correspondence, the crude measure before the House, should be heard of no more. He would, however, contend that this bill would operate considerably to diminish the volunteer corps, and perhaps it would be said therefore that his purpose would be answered, and that his opposition to the system should cease; but to this he begged to reply, that although the bill would have the effect he mentioned, still it was objectionable, because while it would drive numbers from the volunteer corps by its vexatious regulations, yet those who had need of the exemptions would remain. This was no refinement, but a description of the natural and probable operation of this bill, which went to perpetuate the system, while it would go to dissolve the volunteers. So when looking to the improvement of discipline which the bill professed to introduce among the volunteers, and comparing that with the price to be paid for it, one of the consequences would be a deduction from the amount of the volunteer force. With respect to the opinion, that it would be advisable to employ the volunteers among our regular troops, he had the fortune to be supported by the ideas of some general officers of the highest military character in reprobating that plan—a plan which must be productive of the very worst consequences. While such ideas were entertained and propagated, he looked upon it that we were rehearsing the piece which was performed in this country about 800 years ago, under Harold—that we were preparing the country for subjection. He trusted that this project would never be acted upon—that the fate of the country would never be committed upon a battle to be fought between the regular army of the enemy and an army of our volunteers, or one consisting of the so-much talked of mixture. The allusion to the peasantry of La Vendee had been denied as applicable to the case of an armed peasantry in this country; but he was of opinion that the peasantry, constituted as those of La Vendee, would be more effectual than the volunteers. It was true that the Vendean peasantry had been defeated, but principally because they had fought as regulars. To beat an enemy was no doubt a good thing. There was an old receipt for winning a race, namely, “to take the lead, and keep it;” but as to the rational means of obtaining success, the peasantry were almost uniformly successful in annoying the enemy until they embodied themselves in a regular army, and marched to Granville in the hope of receiving some succours from this country. That was the period when, and the manner in which,

which, those peasantry were beaten; such an example would serve to shew how our volunteers, or rather our armed peasantry, should be employed. The character of regular troops could not suit or become such a force; it was folly to think of so applying them. From every thing that he had heard, Ministers might as well think of "dividing the transient air," as of sending forth the volunteers as a regular army. These volunteers, however, he considered as a kind of mongrel institution, half regular and half irregular, which resembled somewhat the state of the man so ludicrously narrated by Pope to have been half circumcised, and therefore not circumcised at all. The system of the volunteers was such as not to fit them for any thing effective. Ministers thought they were acting upon a wise plan, because volunteers were said to have done so much during the progress of the French revolution; but the fact was, that there was no parallel between such volunteers and those which were collected in this country—no, not the least analogy. The volunteers of France, who really resembled those of this country, namely, the national guards of Paris, and others of that description, were never in any one instance marched to the frontier. It never was attempted to oppose them to an enemy as regular troops; but the volunteers who were really so opposed were the same as our regular troops, only that their pay was higher, and that they had the election of their officers. They volunteered, to be sure; but then they were at least eighteen months under arms and receiving military instruction before they were taken to meet the enemy. Such was the case with the French volunteers who fought at Jemappe and other engagements. Therefore, Ministers were much deceived, if the mere name of volunteers in France should induce them to deduce any argument favourable to the notion that any similitude did exist between them and the volunteers of this country, and that, because men who had received 18 months previous discipline were taken into the field as regular troops, that therefore it would be prudent to bring forward our volunteers in the same way. To reckon on the volunteer system as a source of permanent defence he considered a mockery, as it was a creature of zeal and circumstances which were not likely to be permanent; and so sensible were Ministers themselves of this, that they held out exemptions—they excited hope and fear, in order to keep the volunteers together. They attached a penalty to any man who should leave a volunteer corps, and gave a bounty to any man who entered one. He was aware that a considerable number of volunteers had engaged without

any view to exemptions from ballot ; some, too, had entered from that consideration alone. To take away the exemption from the former could not be deemed a harsh proceeding, for, in their original engagement, being influenced by their patriotism and public spirit, the same motives would immediately reconcile them to a measure evidently suggested by a desire to supply the other members of our national force ; while to deprive the latter of those exemptions could not be much complained of. He did not mean to blame those who had a view to the exemptions when they became volunteers ; he only blamed Ministers and their advocates in this system, who were so imprudent as to hold out such a *bonus* to them, a *bonus* so considerable, that in his judgment it was quite sufficient recompence to the volunteers for their attendance at exercise, and therefore he highly disapproved of the proposed allowance of pay. A great deal had been said about the friends and enemies of the volunteers ; but sure he was, that those persons could not be their friends, who insinuated that the volunteers would resign in crowds, if the exemptions were taken from them ; for such a supposition was a reproach to the volunteers, the justice of which he never would admit. It was impossible that men actuated by such gallant notions as evidently inspired the respectable body, would tenaciously demand a privilege which interfered so much with the recruiting of the regular army, and which had such influence on the progress of balloting, that the army of reserve was now literally at a stand, and 14,000 men short of the complement voted by Parliament ; that, in fact, the burthen of the balloting was in consequence of those exemptions, thrown upon those least able to bear it—upon poor labourers with small families, &c. and that at this moment there are not less than 50 guineas offered for substitutes—such is the scarcity of men occasioned by the clause of exemptions. To demonstrate the probability of effects such as he had mentioned with respect to the pressure of the ballot on the poor, for whom Parliament should particularly interest itself, he had only to observe, that every volunteer corps was a self-elected tribunal, which had the power of rendering any man within the district it belonged to liable to, or of releasing him from the operation of the ballot. Now, as the volunteer corps were in general composed of the wealthy tradesmen, the probability was that they would admit those of their own class to their privileged bodies, and reject the labouring poor subject to the ballot. This was a case which appealed to the justice and humanity of the House, and was particularly

larly entitled to attention.—The right hon. Gentleman noticed, among the evils of the volunteer system, the contrast that must arise between volunteers and the regular army, particularly on the score of military distinction, which was a thing to be regarded; for military distinction arose out of the nature of things, and was essential to the structure of an army. It was a distinction of which Parliament should be more tenacious than of any other which arose out of factitious notions. Military distinction he felt was grown cheap of late, and officers were not by any means so ambitious of entering into, or acquiring rank in the line, while they could obtain consequence, and better provision for their families, by engaging in the militia, the army of reserve, or the volunteers. This he knew to be a very general sentiment among the officers, particularly those who belonged to the army of reserve. They confessed they had no objection to the regular army, but that a solicitude for their families induced them to prefer that force in which their families would be better provided for. This was very natural; and our regular army had from this and other causes obtained, for some time back, no accession of strength, nor was it likely to obtain any. He was sorry, however, that its merits should have induced a recurrence to the plan of raising men for rank. He thought that the experience of that abominable system, in the course of the last war, was sufficient to forbid the idea of ever resorting to it again.—The right hon. Gentleman expressed the satisfaction he felt that his opinion on this question was supported by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Fox);—"my hon. Friend (said Mr. Windham) as I am sure he will allow me to call him, and as I well may call him on subjects on which we so generally agree, having commonly found it so difficult to *forbear* calling him so when, unhappily, we so totally disagreed." (*Here Mr. Fox bowed*) The right hon. Gentleman pursued his censures of the volunteer system. It was an institution containing the seeds of future and incalculable mischiefs. In the words of the poet, it

"Hath nature which in time will vipers breed,

"No tooth at present,"

Ministers and their supporters would find this to be the result, and they might have reason most to repent the introduction of this system when it would turn out difficult to overcome—when they would feel it not as the serpent which Hercules could destroy, but as the serpent destroying the herculean Minister (*a laugh*). The right hon. Gentleman

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strongly

strongly reprobated the hue and cry which had been excited, and principally by the Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench, against all those who had freely delivered their opinions in condemnation of the volunteer system. Such an outcry, he had no hesitation in saying, was disgraceful to any man who contributed to raise it, and would be almost equally disgraceful to any man who suffered his conduct to be influenced by it; but it was evidently one of the culpable characteristics of the present Administration, that they had too much a view to that popular favour which, unless under certain modifications and restrictions, should not operate upon the proceedings of Government. They fancied, perhaps, if they could succeed in exciting popular clamour against a Member, they should restrain him from declaring opinions hostile to their measures; but they were excessively mistaken if they supposed, because that fear had so much effect upon themselves, it would have an equal effect upon the minds and conduct of others.—There was another topic to which he thought it necessary to allude; this was an intention, which according to rumour existed, of mixing the volunteers with the regulars in the event of an invasion; and for the purpose of rendering the former perfect in discipline, employing the non-commissioned officers of the latter. Independently of the reasons he had already assigned against such a plan, he had to mention that such an employment of the regular non-commissioned officers would be productive of much confusion. In the first place, he understood the regular regiments were by no means over-supplied with those very useful officers; and even if they were, it would, in his judgment, tend much to injure the discipline of the regular army to pursue this plan. Indeed if the serjeants and corporals were to be thus withdrawn occasionally from their own corps, it would be folly to think of preserving discipline among the regulars; it would in fact be rowing against the stream. With all the confidence that he had in the disposition of our regular army, the right hon. Gentleman declared, that he would not wish to try them by such a connection. It would be rather a dangerous experiment upon their discipline and their habits. The volunteers had the same feathers and the same appearance, with, however, better cloaths and more money. They were also, to be sure, to have their new mutiny bill printed on satin. But what was to be the consequence of the proposed intermixture? How were the serjeants and corporals in such a case to act? They must speak in two different languages, one to the volunteers, and the other to their own regiments. They must

must address each from different sides of their mouth, or very unpleasant consequences may ensue among volunteers, such indeed as he understood had nearly arisen in a recent instance, in consequence of some rough expressions used by a military officer in drilling a certain volunteer corps. Of these rough expressions, or of swearing upon any occasion, &c. too often resorted to by the lower class of military men, he highly disapproved; but the habits of men were not to be suddenly changed, and perhaps there were some to whom rough language was necessary. How then were serjeants and corporals, used from necessity to such language, to behave when introduced to the volunteers? When talking to them they must be courteous and polite; and if, upon returning to their men, they should address them in such a strain, how would the latter feel? Why, it would probably be as strange to them as the behaviour of Nell to the servants in the farce (*a laugh*). But, to be serious, continued the right hon. Gentleman, this system would tend to the worst effects. It would, in fact, drive discipline out of the regular army, without transferring it to the volunteers—it would be to spoil the one without improving the other. The right honourable Gentleman repeated, that the whole system which this bill was meant to continue was incurably bad, and yet it seemed to be the resolution to pursue it; and principally because it had begun, and gone on so long. We were thus proceeding in something like the career of a spendthrift, who got so deep in extravagance that he thought it of no use to alter his career. We seemed to be in the situation of a horse in a full gallop. We were, in a word, so anxious to get on, without pausing, that he knew nothing to compare it to but the ludicrous direction to some messengers, that “they should make such haste, that if they should fall down they should not stay to get up again.”—The volunteers which existed under the present system the right hon. Gentleman knew not, nor ever heard of, any force to resemble, except the *Fédérés* of France, which were such as every general wished to keep from his camp. They formed, in his opinion, a dreadful institution, and all the folios that could be passed in that House could not render them an efficient force under their present constitution. They were quite unparalleled in military history; mere Westminster Hall soldiers, where the Attorney General and the whole smithery were set to work to hammer out their duty (*a general laugh*).—If this new military code were merely a subject of laughter—if it were nothing more than a fooling away the time

time of Parliament to construct or even to revise it—if it were only expoling Parliament to the ridicule of Europe, to do so it might be somewhat tolerable, but it was something more—it threatened dangerous effects hereafter.

“*Hæ nigræ seria ducunt in mala.*”

The right hon. Gentleman concluded by declaring, that the bill was not of a nature which could give satisfaction to the volunteers, or to the country.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* was astonished at the speech of the right hon. Gentleman who had last addressed the House. It appeared to him that the speech had merely been intended to compress in one view the various objections, which on so many former occasions he had urged against the volunteer system. If the arguments of the right hon. Gentleman were to be urged to all their extent, the fact was, that they tended to the utter dissolution of the volunteer system. In this point of view, he could not imagine that the right hon. Gentleman's arguments would meet with the slightest support. It was not denied, that the volunteer system furnished the most important part of our national defence at the present moment, and it would surely not be contended that a system so essentially connected with the independence of the empire, should be abolished. It was rather extraordinary, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman should pretend at such a crisis to attack the efficiency of so great a national establishment. The right hon. Gentleman had talked a great deal of the present structure of the army, but he had not spoken of it compared with what it was under other circumstances of the country. He would now call on those who so loudly objected to the volunteer system, to state why, under their own connection with his Majesty's Government, that system had been so extensively encouraged, as under the administration of the right hon. Gentleman, who had so zealously opposed this system, no fewer than 150,000 volunteers were embodied. It seemed to him rather singular, that the volunteer system should now be attacked as altogether feeble and inefficient, as applicable to the danger which threatened the country. The right hon. Gentleman seemed, however, to argue, that the volunteer system had interfered with the establishment of the regular army. Against such an opinion, he begged leave to enter his solemn protest. He must further be permitted to observe, that the present extended establishment of the volunteers had not at all, as some Gentlemen imagined, interfered with the recruiting of the regular army. On
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the contrary, he would beg leave to assert, that the regular army was now much greater in Ireland than it was at the most critical period of the last war. To this statement he might add, that though only nine months had elapsed since the present war commenced, the regular army was only fifteen thousand short of what it was at the end of the late war, though that war continued no less than nine years. But the right hon. Gentleman who spoke last had stated, that the recruiting of the regular army had been extremely slow in its operation. He wished that the volunteer system should be considered on fair and full grounds. It was not contended that volunteers could supersede the necessity of regular troops; but it was argued, that where a sufficient number of regular troops could not be procured, the services of volunteers might be commuted in their room. It was at the same time to be kept in view, that the services of the volunteers could be commanded with a degree of rapidity which by no other exertions could be procured. The volunteers were never meant to supersede a regular army; but their services might, nevertheless, be of the highest importance. He did not state this on his own opinion or authority, but on the opinion of some of the most distinguished military characters in this country. He begged leave to observe, that no less military characters than Lord Moira, the commander in chief in Ireland, and Gen. Simcoe, had agreed in stating, that the volunteers, united with the troops of the line, would be found fully adequate to every sort of military service. The opinion of the last mentioned officer must be considered by the House highly interesting. It was an opinion founded on positive experience of the discipline of the whole of the volunteers in the southern part of Devonshire. A great deal of stress was laid on the necessity of employing an armed peasantry, and arguments had been employed to shew that this was the species of force most applicable to the present circumstances of the empire. He must however assert, that nothing in the history of warfare at all tended to shew that the present system of the volunteers was not superior to that desultory mode of fighting which Gentlemen on the other side of the House seemed so powerfully to recommend. It was to be kept in view also, that the existence of the present establishment of volunteers was not at all inconsistent with the training of an armed peasantry. With his Majesty remained the power of calling for the services of whatever proportion of his subjects were necessary for the protection of the empire. Some hon. Gentlemen
seemed

seemed to think, that if an armed peasantry had been resorted to, the country would have been placed in a state of greater safety, than by the use of volunteers. He really did not see that any arguments had been used to support such a suggestion. The national guards of France had been employed against the armed peasantry of La Vendee, and had triumphed over them though they had encountered the utmost energy and spirit. The volunteers of this country now were, as nearly as could be, assimilated to the national guards of France, and when he mentioned what they did, not in La Vendee alone, but at the battle of Jemappe and other engagements at the early part of the late war, he would not be denied a fair inference, that the volunteer system could not be held in a contemptible point of view. It did not appear to him fair, to assume it as a principle that those who composed volunteer corps had entered with a view of escaping any other species of service. On the other hand, he had reason to know that many individuals were members of volunteer corps who had no claims of exemption to induce them to take this step. But with all this the recruiting service had not materially suffered. The regular army, even under the existence of the present extended establishment of volunteers, was not suffering under greater inconveniencies than during the late war, when the volunteer system was much less widely extended. The right hon. Gentleman replied generally to several other objections against the volunteer system, and concluded by expressing a hope that the bill would pass the House without further opposition.

Mr. Fox stated the reasons which induced him to oppose the bill. He denied that those who oppose the bill were to be considered as at all enemies to the volunteer establishment. It was not by any means to a voluntary force that any objection was produced, but that instead of four hundred thousand men, forming the present body of volunteers, no less than two millions might have been ready to oppose any invading enemy, by following the establishment of an armed peasantry. With regard to the efficiency of our volunteers, he did not think that the species of argument adopted on the present occasion could be admitted. What had been effected by an armed peasantry was sufficiently seen in America, La Vendee, and in Corsica. In the late war he would allow that the French national guards triumphed over the armed peasantry, but this was not effected without a considerable struggle. More than one campaign elapsed before this object was accomplished.

plished. But what happened in this instance was no criterion for what ought now to be adopted as applicable to our present circumstances. We had not to think how a campaign was to be supported, but how invasion, if it should take place, was to be immediately repelled. It would not be denied that the volunteers would, in due time, be made capable of any species of service; but the question was, under the present circumstances of the empire, what was the species of force most applicable to an immediate crisis? An armed peasantry appeared to be the most efficient species of force, and that was the force which he thought it his duty to recommend as particularly applicable to the dangers with which the empire was threatened. He was anxious, from a conviction that our regular army was insufficient for the defence of the country, that the whole population of the country should be called into activity. He gave full credit to the declarations of the gallant officers, whose testimonies respecting the efficiency of the volunteers had been mentioned; but at the same time, he could not conceive it possible to suppose, that the volunteer system was at all to be put in competition with the general training of the country. In the one case, there was a certain proportion of the community very imperfectly disciplined; in the other, there was a vast mass of active population sufficient to overcome any invading force, however powerful in point of discipline, or however formidable in point of numbers. The hon. Member then went over the arguments used by Mr. Windham, which he illustrated and confirmed. He pointedly condemned the whole conduct of Ministers so far as the military system of the country was concerned, and gave it as his decided opinion, that the bill was an additional proof of the weakness and incapacity of his Majesty's present Government.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* wished to advert to a few points that had been taken notice of by the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down. The opinion of Lord Moira, which he had formerly stated, he had received not confidentially, but merely from the public returns of the noble Lord. The opinion of General Simcoe he had given on the same grounds as stated in his return for the division which he commanded. The testimony of the persons to whom he had alluded were well known, and might be regarded as very good authorities for the opinion which he had supported of the efficiency of the volunteers.

Sir James Pulteney said, that whatever might have been his opinion about the propriety of instituting a volunteer force in the first instance, yet as it had been adopted, he would now take the system as he found it, and he had no hesitation in saying, that upon the whole he approved of this bill. He was very far from agreeing with those who said that a little discipline was worse than none; he did not say the volunteers were perfect, but surely the discipline they had attained must make them better soldiers than if they had none. One great branch of discipline was the use of the firelock; that the volunteers had attained; the next was marching; in that also they had made very considerable improvement; and the third, which was perhaps of as great consequence as the others, was the acquirement of steadiness and regularity. All these the volunteers had in a great degree attained; and he had no doubt but that with the spirit they possessed, they would be eminently useful. It had been said, that the volunteers ought not to be employed in line against regulars; but even if they were not, the discipline they had attained would be very far from disqualifying them for any other kind of service. Much had been said about an armed peasantry of two millions of men, but it was obvious that only a given number could be brought to act against 50 or 60,000, supposing the French could land so many, and therefore 100,000 armed peasantry would in that case be as useful as two millions. It had been argued that the volunteer system injured the recruiting for the army, from the number of exemptions that were granted; but he could not concur in this opinion, because it was known that there were very few principals either in the militia or the army of reserve, as they were almost entirely composed of substitutes.

Mr. Dickinson disapproved of the conduct of Ministers with respect to the volunteer system. However, in the present danger, he would consent to any proposition for augmenting the army, the militia, or the volunteers.

Mr. Rose said, he was a strong friend to the volunteer system, because he thought it would be productive of the greatest advantage. With regard to the bill before the House, he confessed it had disappointed him, because he expected it would have remedied many inconveniences which had been felt in the country, but which it left untouched. He was the more disappointed because from a measure that had occupied the attention of Parliament so long, it was natural to expect that much would be done; but in fact this bill did almost

almost nothing. There was, indeed, but one clause in the bill which, in his opinion, could produce any good effect, and that was a clause introduced by his right hon. Friend (Mr. Pitt). He thought this clause of great importance, because it gave every possible encouragement to the volunteers to go out for the purpose of exercise; but he was sorry to find that the money allowed was to be laid out in necessaries, because he thought it would very considerably take away the inducement that was held out to them. There was one clause of which he entirely disapproved, and that was the clause which gave to farmers a proportion of the pay allowed to their servants who were volunteers, as he was sure it would prevent them from going out for the purpose of being trained and exercised. Upon the whole, he expected very little from this bill; indeed he was not sure that it would not do more harm than good; however, under all the circumstances of the case, he should not give it any opposition.

Mr. Curwen said, he should have to trouble the House with but a few words. He entertained no doubts as to the public spirit and feeling of the volunteers: but with respect to the degree of perfection in training and discipline to which they, generally speaking, had arrived, he certainly had considerable doubts. The right hon. Gentleman had vaunted of the state of discipline to which corps in a particular part of the kingdom, to the number of between 2 and 3000 men, had arrived; but were all the returns of the inspecting officers to be laid before the House, a wide difference would soon be perceived, and the number of corps fit for duty, and to act with troops of the line, would, he believed, be found very inconsiderable.

General Loftus observed, that under the present circumstances of the country, he felt it his duty to give the bill his best support. He approved of the plan of blending the corps of volunteers with the regular army, which consisted of a given number of brigades, and placed under general officers acquainted with the service. He deprecated the idea of bringing the volunteers by themselves into action, of marching them into parts of the country to which they were totally strangers, or of placing general officers at the head of troops with whom they were entirely unacquainted — He had made these observations not with the least view of throwing difficulties in the way, but in the way of caution. No idea could be rationally entertained of bringing the volunteers into the field, without any body to lead them. This he applied

to the idea of employing the volunteers singly—if such were to be acted upon, experience would soon show its injurious effects. He next adverted to the important consideration of driving the cattle from those parts of the coast where an enemy was likely to effect a landing. He recollected, when serving under the present Lord Howe, in America, that the enemy uniformly took the precaution of driving the cattle from such parts of the coast as his debarkations were made; this operation threw his Majesty's forces into a distressing dilemma, and they were always forced to recur to their own magazines: the consequence was, that with all the skill and ability of that celebrated officer, he was unable to penetrate further than 30 or 40 miles up the country. He was happy to understand that it was the intention of Government to take the precaution of driving the cattle from the coasts, which necessarily must reduce the enemy to the alternative of subsisting upon the contents of their own magazines.

General Tarleton said, he should detain the House but for a very few minutes, and his endeavours would be to correct a mis-statement which had frequently been made with regard to recruiting the army, and in which that night it had been asserted we were wonderfully successful. The fact however, he was sorry to say, was very different. In some districts, he knew, recruits were not to be had. A great part of the statements which had been made on the contrary, were founded on the numbers who were drawn from the army of reserve, who were induced by a superadded and excessive premium to enter into the general service, and these they called recruits. There was a clause, he observed, in the army of reserve act, allowing men of the height of five feet two, to enter as substitutes; the consequence of which was, that on a certain occasion, where upwards of 1000 men had entered from the army of reserve, owing to the five feet two clause, there could not be found one man of five feet four for the general defence of the country. Therefore if the data of these statements were taken from what was furnished by the army of reserve, it was a deception upon the House and the country. He then called the attention of the House to the favourable circumstances for Ministers under which the present war was commenced; with a Parliament confiding beyond all former example, and with the spirit of patriotism and loyalty universally diffused throughout the country, they were furnished with men to render the force of the country completely invulnerable. But how far they were

were from improving these advantages, and establishing a complete and effective force in the country, was now pretty generally known. With respect to the measures intended to be proposed by an hon. Secretary for augmenting the troops of the line, when they came before the House he should deliver his sentiments upon them: but of this he was convinced in common with all officers who were conversant upon the subject, that the army ought to be augmented, and that much time had been lost.

Lord Castlereagh found it necessary to explain, as an allusion had been made to a statement which he had given on a former occasion, that the recruiting service had not been a fourteenth less than at any former period. The injury he was willing to admit in a certain degree, but not by any means to the extent that was contended for.

Mr. C. Wynne made some observations upon defects, which, he contended, prevailed in the present volunteer system. The men, he said, could not learn the use of arms before they had arms given them. A comparatively small number were acquainted with ball firing. He knew of two counties where not a single musket had been received, and other districts where not one half of the volunteers had been armed. He was glad the House were about to be rid of such a bill: it was going to a place whence he hoped it would not return, unless it was inoculated with a little more vigour, and a little more efficacy.

Sir W. Geary made a few remarks upon the subject, and contended, that the volunteer system could not be fairly held to interfere with the recruiting of the line, the diminution of which proceeded from the militia and the army of reserve.

Mr. H. Lascelles said a few words respecting the provisions in the bill relative to farmers' servants; the time, he thought, should be enlarged, or perpetual disputes would ensue.

The question being loudly called for, was then put, when the bill was read a third time and passed, and Mr. Tierney was ordered to carry it to the Lords for their concurrence.

The report of the innkeepers' allowance bill was received, and the bill ordered to be read a third time the next day.

The remaining orders of the day were disposed of, and at half past twelve o'clock the House adjourned.

HOUSE

HOUSE OF LORDS.

FRIDAY, MARCH 23.

The Royal assent was given by commission to seventeen public and private bills : among the former were the Exchequer bills bill, the Irish revenue, the Irish countervailing duties, the Irish malt duty, the hides and tallow importation, the sugar warehousing, the neutral ships, and the rape seed oil importation bills ; and among the latter, *Boydell's* picture lottery, the *Rochdale* canal subscription, and three naturalization bills. The Lords Commissioners were the Lord Chancellor, Lord Hawkesbury, and Lord Walsingham.

Lord Ashburton was sworn and took his seat on attaining his majority.

Counsel were heard in continuation, relative to the Scotch appeal, *Fleming v. Abercromby*. To proceed again on Monday.

VOLUNTEER REGULATIONS BILL.

The volunteer regulation bill was brought up from the Commons by Mr. Tierney, accompanied by a few Members.

Lord Hawkesbury moved the first reading of the bill ; accordingly the title and breviat of the bill were read by the Lord Chancellor.

The noble Secretary then moved, that the bill be printed for the use of their Lordships. He observed, at the same time, that the forms of the House did not allow the second reading of a bill to be regularly moved, until the prints were before the House. However, as there was every probability that the prints would be ready for delivery the next day, he should now give notice, that on Monday it was his intention to move for the second reading of the bill.

Earl Spencer rose, not, he said, for the purpose of opposing the measure, or to throw any difficulties in the way of his Majesty's Government in the present circumstances, but merely to suggest to Ministers and to the House the consideration, whether a bill of the peculiar nature and importance of that, the heads of which had just been read, a measure, the principle of which was not only so very important, but in itself embracing such a variety of detailed provisions, could be maturely considered, so far as to make up their Lordships minds as to that species of discussion required

ed at a second reading, in the very short interval between the delivery of the bill and Monday next: he thought it could not. He deprecated the idea of any improper haste being used in the progress of the bill in that House. Their Lordships would recollect the extraordinary length of time it was under consideration in another place, the repeated discussions the measure had undergone, and the variety of amendments which had been made in it. It was therefore incumbent on their Lordships to give the measure a full and mature consideration in all its branches and details: in the present circumstances, it was one of the greatest importance: the character and dignity of the House were implicated in the consideration; they should evince to the public their determination to give the measure a full investigation, and that no improper haste should be used on the part of their Lordships in passing the bill. Under these impressions he begged leave to suggest to the noble Secretary, that Tuesday should be the earliest day fixed on for the second reading.

Lord Hawkebury observed, that it was by no means the wish of his Majesty's Ministers to use any improper haste in the progress of the bill; on the contrary, it was their wish that the measure should undergo a full and thorough investigation. At the same time he could not help observing to the noble Earl, that the detailed and repeated discussions the bill had already received, rendered its contents pretty well known to the public, and perhaps to a great number of their Lordships; however, though his wish was, that a measure of such peculiar importance in the present circumstances of the country, should receive as little delay as possible, after what had been suggested, he had no objection to take Tuesday as the day for moving the second reading.

Earl Fitzwilliam spoke in support of what fell from the noble Earl near him (*Spencer*); he urged the propriety of giving the bill a full and mature consideration in that House. He adverted to the deliberate discussions it had undergone in the other House of Parliament, and the many alterations and amendments it had been found necessary to make in the measure as originally proposed to that House.

The *Earl of Darnley* expressed his coincidence in a great deal of what fell from the noble Earls at his side of the House; but at the same time he must avow his opinion, that in the present circumstances of the country, the bill should be delayed as little as possible in its progress. No Lord could
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more highly estimate the character and dignity of that House than himself: but there were certain regulations in the bill which it would be expedient to carry into effect as soon as possible. He was however an advocate for a full and thorough discussion of the measure; on that ground he had no objection to the proposed delay; but if he thought there was a probability of their Lordships being able adequately to discuss the measure previous to the intended recess, he should have no objection to the day first named by the noble Secretary of State.

Lord Hawkebury, in explanation, assured the noble Lords there was no intention on the part of Ministers to hurry the progress of the measure. He was equally aware of the various and complicated nature of the measure, as of its peculiar importance; it certainly embraced many detailed considerations, each of which involved a principle in itself: it was then right that the whole should be fully and maturely considered, and if such could not be done previous to the recess, they had no particular desire to urge its passing before that period.

Lord Harrowby made a variety of observations, not only on the bill itself, but on a great part of the conduct of his Majesty's Ministers relative thereto. In one point of view, it was his wish that the bill should receive the sanction of the Legislature as speedily as possible, as it contained, in particular, one provision of which he approved, namely, that which held out a bounty for the encouragement of volunteers to perfect themselves in military discipline and exercise. This part of the bill, when he considered the critical circumstances, with respect to pending invasion, in order to be of real service, should be carried into effect as speedily as possible, for on a short approaching interval much may depend. The noble Lord then adverted to the delays which he conceived Ministers had suffered to take place with respect to the measure in question, and censured their conduct on that head. Much time had been lost. This was the only measure they brought forward for the defence of the country, and as little time should be lost as possible. He deprecated the idea of losing any time in consideration of a recess; but if such a proceeding was resolved upon, he hoped it would be for the shortest period possible, not extending beyond the Monday which would follow the second reading of the bill. His Lordship then alluded to some parts of the bill, which, from their questionable nature, as well as on account of the

the conduct of Ministers in these respects, he deemed to require mature consideration and thorough investigation on the part of their Lordships.

The *Earl of Carnarvon* said, that the conversation was perfectly irregular, and that the arguments used were still more so, as they were in express breach of one of the standing orders of the House, even if the subject was before them. It is a standing order, said his Lordship, that it shall never be urged as an argument against the full consideration of any subject that the pressure of time called for a speedy decision. If there is any danger in the interval required for mature deliberation of this measure, it is imputable to the negligence of Administration, who have suffered so long a space to lapse between their declaration that war was inevitable, and the production of any new system which they might think necessary for the defence of the country: but no pressure of time can make it fit that any measure should be passed without due deliberation: no precipitation can be admitted which may give sanction to an inadequate, if not a dangerous system. The carelessness and precipitation with which important bills have been passed, is sufficiently proved by the repeated necessity of correcting their errors. In the last session one of the most important bills has passed connected with the present; it passed in a thin House in two days, without observation, and was in the same session amended, and both the amended and amending bill again reamended in the same session, and with the same hurry as if it was not fit to be seen, or could support discussion; and it still requires another amendment, if not a total repeal. Without any reason, and without deliberate examination, it asserts a prerogative in the Crown, which no reading in history or law ever gave me the slightest suspicion of; nor have I met with any person who can detail the proofs of such prerogative having ever been asserted but in this act. Whether the present measure suspends, repeals, or confirms this act I know not. The noble Secretary says, that the subject has been so long in every man's mind that he must be easily prepared for the discussion. I do not know the contents of the bill; I have not even read it since its last recommitment, since which many alterations have been made; and I am only sure that it must be connected with a bill which requires great attention, I mean the defence bill, before it can be fit to graft any other upon it. I trust, therefore, that no hurry in passing this bill is intended: Tuesday is too short a time to con-

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sider a bill whose print will not be delivered till to-morrow evening, and which arises out of and rests on the foundation of other bills which require themselves a concurrent examination.

The *Lord Chancellor* quitted the woolstack, and delivered his sentiments upon the occasion. He adverted to the irregular turn which the debate had taken, but which to observe upon, as he then felt it proper, he must necessarily fall into the same irregularity himself. The question he conceived was, whether the bill should be read a second time on Tuesday; and in considering this, the noble and learned Lord commented on what had fallen from a noble Earl then near him, and from a noble Lord who had spoken at the opposite side of the House: the inconsistency of whose arguments, as operating either in favour of delay or, on the contrary, for expedition were remarked upon by his Lordship. With his noble Friend he agreed in the propriety of maturely and deliberately considering the measure before them; it was irregular in point of form, as well as an erroneous way of considering the case, to go upon an assumption of what the House in its wisdom may resolve upon with respect to the ensuing period of recess. He seemed to think the latter day mentioned, the preferable of the two, as, in common with several of their Lordships, he knew but very little of the detailed provisions of the bill, save from that description of them which his duty, on the occasion of the first reading of the bill, rendered it necessary he should read to the House; and he was fully convinced of the propriety of duly and thoroughly discussing the measure in question.

The Earl of Darnley spoke in explanation, and Lord Minto seemed inclined to speak, when

Lord Walsingham deemed it incumbent on him to remind their Lordships of the obvious irregularity of the present discussion. There was, strictly speaking, no question before the House, as in point of form, the second reading of the bill could not regularly be moved for, until the prints were before their Lordships.

The correctness of this remark was with great good humour acknowledged by the Lord Chancellor, and

Lord Hawkebury, in the course of a short explanation as to the point of form, reminded their Lordships, that what the noble Lord had observed, had been conceived by him in the first instance. He then observed that it was his intention to move for the second reading of the bill on Tuesday.

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The innkeepers allowance bill and two private bills were brought up from the Commons. These were severally read a first time; and the few bills on the table forwarded each a stage.

Their Lordships then adjourned till Monday.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

FRIDAY, MARCH 23.

The House having, pursuant to summons, proceeded to the House of Lords, the Speaker on their return stated, that the royal assent had been given by commission to several public bills.

Mr. Vanittart presented an account of the net produce of the ordinary and extraordinary revenues of Great Britain for the year 1803. Ordered to be printed.

Mr. Irving presented an account of the amount of the revenue received upon imports and exports for the preceding eighteen years.

Mr. Kemp, from the Tax-office, presented an account of the produce of the permanent taxes of Great Britain for the last year, with a duplicate. Ordered to be laid on the table and to be printed.

The innkeepers allowance bill was read a third time and passed.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that a copy of the proceedings of the Privy Council, respecting the ships captured at Toulon, in the course of the last war, had been some time lying on the table of the House, and he gave notice of his intention of moving in the Committee of Supply on Monday next, for a grant of a sum to carry into effect the recommendation of the Lords of the Treasury, in order that the sum should be distributed among the captors of those prizes.

The House having considered, in Committee, the act of the 42d of the King respecting the regulation of the linen manufacture, the chairman obtained leave to bring in a bill to repeal so much of the said act as relates to the Irish linen manufacture, particularly with respect to flax seed.

A person from the commissioners of customs presented an account of the balances and arrears due by the collectors of the customs. Ordered to be printed.

Lord A. Hamilton rose, pursuant to notice, to move for the production of a copy of any orders which may have been

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issued

issued by the Lords of his Majesty's Treasury in Ireland, affecting the half pay of officers on the Irish establishment when employed in England. The noble Lord stated his object to be to ascertain whether the indulgence of paying the revenues of the civil officers of the Irish Government in this country at par, was extended to any other persons, and particularly whether the meritorious persons who were the subjects of his motion experienced this mark of favour.

Mr. Corry said, he was not aware of the existence of any order such as the noble Lord alluded to, but yet he had no objection to the motion; nor to answer any question which might be put by the noble Lord, or any other Member, in order to put the House in possession of full and satisfactory information with respect to the affairs of Ireland.

The motion was agreed to.

CAPTURES AT TOULON.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer*, finding that he was mistaken in supposing the report of the proceedings of the Privy Council respecting the captures at Toulon, to which he had before alluded, were printed, said, he should propose the printing of this document, and, in order to give time to the House to examine it, should withdraw his notice for Monday, and defer until Wednesday the motion in the Committee of Supply.

Mr. Johnstone thought this a subject of so much importance, and one so likely to give rise to considerable difference of opinion, that the proposed motion of the right hon. Gentleman ought to be postponed till after the recess, in order to give time for consideration, and that the discussion and attendance should be full and satisfactory.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* stated, that from the nature of this business all unnecessary delay should be avoided; and he was certain, that did the hon. Member know the extreme anxiety felt by the seamen and others interested in the subject, he would himself be among the first to press that it should be decided on as soon as possible.

Mr. Rose was not aware, before that day, that any such papers as those alluded to by the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down were on the table of the House; nor was he aware that any such claim had ever been preferred by those engaged in taking the ships, &c. at Toulon, although he was long in office after that event. The subject appeared to him to be of much importance, and he was therefore inclined

inclined to agree with the proposition for farther time to consider it than the right hon. Gentleman had mentioned.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* stated, in proof of the urgency of the case, and the propriety of expedition, that many of the persons interested in the discussion only waited the result to set off for different stations in the service of their country. If, however, it should appear that the attendance should be thin on Wednesday, and that the proposition was not, therefore, likely to receive an ample discussion, he certainly should comply with the wish expressed for putting it off till after the holidays.

After a few words from Mr. Rose and Mr. G. Vanfittart, the papers were ordered to be printed.

PROPERTY TAX.

Mr. Vanfittart moved for leave to bring in a bill to repeal part of the property tax act, for the purpose of relieving bankers and others receiving dividends, from the penalties to which they would otherwise be liable.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* observed, that the measure was brought forward in consequence of its being understood that the bankers wished such a measure to be brought in previous to the recess.

After a few words from Mr. Dent, leave was given.

The bill was afterwards brought in by Mr. Vanfittart, read a first and second time, and committed for Monday.

LOYALTY LOAN.

Mr. Dent, in adverting to this subject, observed, that an opinion had been given by the counsel to the Bank, different from those of the Attorney and Solicitor General. The subject was of very considerable importance, as it involved a capital of 20,250,000*l.* and if the period of payment was to be deferred till April 1805, and any event, such as a peace, should take place, causing a great rise in the price of the funds, a very material consideration would arise out of it, as the loyalty loan could not then rise above par. It was important that the question, respecting the time of payment, should be settled, as he understood that several holders of the loan, to the amount of upwards of 2,000,000*l.* had given notice that they expected to be paid on the 10th of October next.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that the subject divided itself into two heads, the first a question of law, and the next of equity. With respect to the question of law, the

the law officers of the Crown had given an opinion different to that supported by the hon. Gentleman. As to the question of equity, whilst he agreed in the importance of the subject, he should certainly pay every attention to it, and endeavour to bring the point, respecting which difficulties had arisen, to a decision as soon as possible.

Mr. Dent observed, that something should be done before the 10th of April.

IRISH MILITIA.

The report of the Irish militia families provision bill was brought up.

Mr. Foster said, that there was a mistake in this bill, by which the allowance to the children of militiamen was set down at 2s. instead of 4s. each.

Mr. Corry observed, that this mistake might be amended on the third reading.

Mr. Foster reminded the right hon. Gentleman that that would not be parliamentary: the amendment must take place in a Committee.

The bill was ordered to be recommitted on Monday.

AYLESBURY ELECTION.

The report of the Committee on the Aylesbury election was taken into consideration.

Several of the resolutions of the Committee were read and agreed to, after some conversation respecting a point of order between the Speaker and *Mr. Bankes*. Upon coming to the resolution in which the name of *John Rawbones* is inserted among those implicated in the charge of bribery,

The *Marquis of Titchfield* rose, and stating his opinion that sufficient proof did not appear to sustain the charge against this man, he moved that his name should be omitted.

Mr. C. W. Wynne said, that he was a member of the Committee appointed to try this case, in which it appeared that *John Rawbones* was present at a table when another person received a bribe, and this in consequence of a previous invitation. The Committee, therefore, felt it their duty to report his name, leaving it to the House to decide whether his presence upon the occasion alluded to should be considered an assent to the act, and a participation of the guilt.

The *Master of the Rolls* thought that it would be extremely wrong, upon the grounds stated by the hon. Member, to institute any such prosecution against the subject of this motion as that which took place in the Ilchester case.

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The motion for his name being omitted was agreed to.

Sir George Cornwall rose, agreeably to notice, to move for leave to bring in a bill to prevent bribery and corruption in the election of representatives for the borough of Aylesbury. The hon. Baronet observed upon the scandalous system of corruption which prevailed at Aylesbury during the last election. A number of the voters not being satisfied with two candidates, deputed some of their body to search for a third, whom they found out, and from whom they received a certain sum of money as a reward for their support at the election. This had appeared in evidence before the Committee, and he as their chairman had been appointed by the almost unanimous voice of the members, not to move for the disqualification of the voters concerned in the bribery, nor for their prosecution, but for the introduction of such a bill as he now had the honour to submit, and which it was considered would go more effectually to cure the evil complained of.

The *Marquis of Titchfield* conceived the object of the bill to be to throw open the borough, and as such he highly disapproved of it. He had no objection to any proceeding against the guilty persons, but he trusted that Parliament would never consent to infringe the rights of above three hundred electors for this borough, merely upon the ground that, according to the report of the Committee, of which the hon. Baronet was chairman, 50 votes had been implicated in bribery. He hoped that no such attempt at disqualification would ever be countenanced in that House, and feeling that the idea ought not to be entertained, he should vote against the motion.

Mr. C. W. Wynne begged to set his noble Friend right, as the corruption was much more extensive than he had stated, for although the names of only 50 persons were mentioned, not less than 200 electors were proved to have accepted bribes. This case was, indeed, so distinguished for open profligacy, that he had never heard of any thing at all like it. It was as unblushing as if the bellman had been sent round the town to offer a bribe to any elector that would accept it; and those bribes were proved to have been distributed by the supporters of each of the contending parties. He did not therefore conceive that any grounds could exist to render it more strongly incumbent on the Legislature to interpose.

Mir. Rose said, that from the depositions of Wilson, a man who was very well disposed to evade the facts, as the House was aware, it appeared that above 200 of the electors
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of this borough had accepted bribes; that they were all collected in a room, on the table of which there was at one end a bowl of punch, and at the other a bowl of guineas, from which each man had his *douceur*, and creed proved; and that of the 270 who supported Mr. Bent, only 50 votes were free votes. This was evidence sufficient to convict those men before a jury; and, with such evidence before Gentlemen, could they, he would ask, consistently with their own character, or indeed with common decency, consent to reject a bill which had for its object to prevent the recurrence of similar corruption?

Sir John Newport stated that the letter of invitation to the third candidate was signed by 200 electors, each of whom covenanted for and received his bribe. It was the custom among the electors of this borough to demand Christmas boxes of their representatives, and, to enforce the payment of them, they say, that they shall always have a third candidate at the election, in order to enhance their own value. They had become discontented with the old candidates at the last election, and they contrived to find a third, of whom they made use to plunder the other two and himself also. It appeared that in addition to the other guilt proved against those Gentlemen of Aylesbury, many of them went to each of the opposing parties and promised their support. As they could not vote for more than two candidates, they of course meant to trick the third. When the third candidate arrived at Aylesbury, pursuant to the invitation already referred to, his carriage was dragged through the town, and at the house he stopped at all the voters inclined to sell their support to him were assembled, none being admitted but persons qualified to vote, and each received two guineas. The hon. Baronet, after commenting upon the turpitude of such conduct, observed that in his judgment the House should be happy to avail itself of such cases to throw open those boroughs, and thus to advance towards that pure representation of the people which some gentlemen had proposed to attain by other means that were not consonant with the free spirit of our constitution. This appeared to him to be the method by which Parliament might purify the representation of the people in that House, and therefore he never gave a vote with more sincere satisfaction than that he felt in supporting the motion under discussion.

Mr. Nicholas Calvert approved of the motion, as he considered this to be one of those jobbing boroughs, all of which he

he should be happy to see thrown open. There, any man who had a few thousands to spend, might, however unknown to or unconnected with the place, or however exceptionable in character, contrive, by a judicious application of that sum, to obtain his election. In such boroughs, from what he heard, he was disposed to believe that there was generally an understanding between the partisans of the old and new candidates, the policy of both of whom it always was, and for obvious reasons, to create a contest. The only practicable way, as it struck him, of removing such scandalous artifices, was by opening these boroughs.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that it was enough for him to know that gross bribery had been committed in the borough of Aylesbury, that a select Committee had, upon grave investigation, decided that such was the case, and had in consequence reported such proceedings to the House. He must think it incumbent upon him to vote in support of a measure, in the first instance, which purported to go to the prevention of a repetition of such practices. But he did not mean it to be understood, that by such a vote he held himself pledged to the support of this or that measure; on the contrary, he positively and unequivocally declared, that he did not bind himself to any thing more than the support of a bill with a title such as the present, reserving to himself to express his opinion, whatever it might be, without any restraint whatever, in an ulterior stage of the business. Indeed he confessed that there was some degree of doubt upon his mind with respect to the present case, as Robert Dupree, Esq. the sitting member, had a charge laid against him, which was different from the case of the Cricklade and Shoreham elections. With the resolutions before them, which the House had received, he thought that they must see the propriety of admitting the bill which was then proposed.

Mr. Hurst declared, in the most distinct terms, that he thought it becoming the dignity of the House that they should adopt some measure for the assertion of its own rights, and for the preservation of the freedom of election, in an instance where they were so flagrantly violated. But he could not at the same time refrain from expressing his disapprobation of a principle which had been laid down in the speech of the honourable Gentleman, who said that the number of corrupt voters was not necessary to be looked to, for that he thought it was sufficient that the existence of bribery within the bo-

rough was proved, in order to make him see the necessity of adopting a parliamentary regulation to prevent the recurrence of such a case hereafter. Now, he was of opinion that the bribery or corruption of any small portion of the inhabitants of any place could by no means warrant the House in taking upon them to interfere with the manner of voting within that district. In the present case, it was manifest that a regular system of corruption had been adopted and acted upon to a very great extent. It was therefore an act which the House owed to itself and to the constitution, to receive a bill for the future regulation of elections in such a place, at least so far as to prevent a repetition of such disgraceful practices. As to the internal merits of the bill, how far its contents went to prevent the evil complained of, or whether it might not go too far, he did not mean to inquire in the present stage of the business, but should declare his sentiments, unfettered by any pledge or promise, at a future period, in the same manner as the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer had declared that it was his intention to do. The cases of the Shoreham and the Cricklade elections he thought by no means similar to the present.

The *Member of the Rolls* expressed himself glad that no steps were suggested to be taken by the House to prosecute the individuals implicated, as he should consider such a measure inexpedient. By agreeing to the introduction of the bill, he did not pledge himself to its principle; respecting which he should reserve himself for the second reading.

Sir R. Buxton observed, that at the time when the Attorney General was instructed to proceed in the case of the borough of Cricklade, it was one of the most corrupt within the kingdom; since it had been made an open borough it was as free and pure as any county in Great Britain. He was no friend to innovation; but he believed that if the House was to amend the state of the borough representation throughout the kingdom, it would contribute much to the honour of the House and the stability of our system.

The question was at length put, and leave was granted to bring in the bill.

Sir G. Cornewall moved, that a new writ should not be issued for the election of a member for the borough of Aylesbury until after the 27th of April. Ordered.

Mr. Rose said, that Mr. Bent being charged in the report with bribery and corruption, he should feel it his duty shortly after the recess to move for an address to his Majesty

jeſty to direct the Attorney General to proſecute that Gentleman.

Sir John Newport adverted to an order of the Houſe, made ſome time ſince, for the production of accounts from the treaſurers of the counties in Ireland, of the monies paid to houſes of induſtry. Theſe accounts not having been produced, he gave notice that if they were not forthcoming by the end of the Eaſter reſeſs, he ſhould move for ſome ſtrong meaſures upon the ſubject.

The ſtatute duty bill paſſed through a Committee, the report was received, and ordered to be taken into further conſideration on Tueſday the 17th of April.

The Committees of Supply and Ways and Means were poſtponed till Monday, to which day the Houſe adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

MONDAY, MARCH 26.

Counſel was heard relative to the croſs appeal, *Abercromby v. Fleming*. The further conſideration of the caſe was adjourned till Wedneſday.

Three private bills were received from the Commons, and ſeverally read a firſt time.

Lord Hawkeſbury preſented a meſſage from his Maſteſty relative to the tender of the Irith militia regiments to ſerve in any part of Great Britain, ſimilar to that delivered to the Commons, and concluding with the expreſſion of his Maſteſty's reliance upon the concurrence of their Lordſhips in meaſures to enable his Maſteſty to avail himſelf of the ſame, &c.

The meſſage being read,

Lord Hawkeſbury moved, that the ſame be taken into conſideration on Wedneſday next, and that their Lordſhips be ſummoned for that day.

The *Earl of Limerick* roſe, not by any means to oppoſe the motion of the noble Secretary of State, but to expreſs his moſt cordial approbation of the circumſtance which gave riſe to ſuch an auſpicious communication from the Throne. He had to congratulate the inhabitants of both parts of the united kingdom upon the occaſion: his countrymen, upon their coming forward in a manner ſo truly patriotic, and which redounded ſo greatly to their honour, and offering to identify their intereſts and their fate upon ſuch an occaſion

as the present; and the inhabitants of Great Britain, upon such an important accession to the active and efficient force of their country. He felt assured that in cases of the like necessity the militia of Great Britain would freely come forward and volunteer their services to any part of Ireland. He regarded this event as a most favourable opening, and which, he trusted, would lead to further interchanges and co-operations of the respective forces of both parts of the united kingdom.

Lord Viscount Carleton made a few observations to the same general effect as those which fell from the noble Earl.

The question was then put, and the motions of the noble Secretary of State ordered accordingly.

Lord Hawkesbury moved, that the volunteer regulation bill be read a second time the next day. Ordered.

Lord Grenville moved for the production of certain articles of information relative to the volunteer corps: the motions were in the usual shape of an address to his Majesty, that he would be graciously pleased to order the proper officers to lay them before the House; and were,

First, A copy of the circular letter issued by the Secretary of State to the Lord Lieutenants of counties, relative to the carrying into execution the several acts of Parliament of the last session, respecting the volunteer corps.

Secondly, A list of such volunteer corps as had waved the exemptions.

Thirdly, An account of those volunteer corps whose offers of service did not extend to the whole of Great Britain, distinguishing the places to which the exemptions were severally made, &c.

Lord Hawkesbury signified that he had no objection to the noble Lord's motions.

The questions were then put, and the motions severally agreed to.

The bills upon the table were forwarded in their respective stages.

Earl Spencer made a few observations relative to the future progress of the volunteer bill. He called the attention of the House to the great variety of important clauses and provisions which the bill contained. He did not think it probable the measure could be thoroughly discussed in a Committee before the recess; he was therefore of opinion that the detailed discussion of the bill should be postponed until after that period. He adverted to the circumstance of the very

very important information which was necessary to the due elucidation of the measure just moved for by his noble Friend (Lord Grenville), which most probably could not be presented early enough for that part of the discussion, supposing it to come on before the recess. Upon the whole, the noble Earl seemed to think, that as there was no probability of the bill's getting through the Committee before the recess, it would be preferable to postpone it, as a partial discussion of the measure before that period, in a Committee, would rather be a disadvantage than of a beneficial tendency.

Lord Hawkebury observed, that it was his wish the bill should go through a Committee. As to the probable length of the discussion in that stage of the bill, he could not venture an opinion, as he could not tell what clauses or provisions any noble Lord might have to propose, or what objections might be offered to the existing regulations of the bill; but if he found that it was not possible, or very improbable, that their Lordships could get through with that stage of the bill before the recess, he should be rather inclined not to propose it, as he agreed with the noble Earl in thinking that in such a case the proceeding would be rather disadvantageous than otherwise.

The Earl of Limerick moved for the production of an account of all sums, &c. paid at par, to persons in and from Ireland, on the part of the Government thereof, since the union, distinguishing the sums so paid in each session of Parliament, with an account of the average of exchange during that period, together with a statement of the orders from the Government of Ireland, under which such sums were paid, &c.

Lord King expressed his wish to amend the noble Earl's motion, by the addition of "Account of all sums paid in specie in Dublin," if any were so paid.

This was shortly objected to by the Earl of Limerick, on the score of irregularity, and as it might form ground to the noble Lord for a separate discussion, and after a few words in explanation between these peers, Lord King declined pressing the amendment.

The question was then put upon the Earl of Limerick's motion, which was ordered accordingly.

Mr. Bithop presented certain accounts from the London Flour and Meal Company, directed annually to be laid before Parliament.

Mr. Irving, from the Inspector General of the imports and

and exports office, presented sundry accounts from that department.

Mr. Stavely, from the general post office, presented an account of the arrears due from certain officers of that department, on the 5th of January, 1804; and also an account of the balances in hand from the month of October 1803, to January last.

These documents were severally ordered to lie on the table.

Their Lordships then, after disposing of some private business, adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, MARCH 26.

The bill for increasing the capital stock of the Governor and Company of the Bank of Scotland was read a third time, and passed.

Sir George Cornewall brought in a bill for the prevention of bribery in the borough of Aylesbury, and for making several regulations respecting elections in that borough in future. Read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time on Monday the 16th of April next.

Sir John Newport stated, that he had moved for the production of certain public accounts on the 2d of February last. These accounts had not yet been presented; he therefore moved, "that there be forthwith laid before the House, in conformity to the order of the 2d of Feb. last, accounts of any and what sums have been raised by grand juries, and paid into the hands of the treasurers of counties, counties of cities, or towns in Ireland, towards support of the houses of industry, in the years 1801, 1802, and 1803 respectively." Ordered.

A person from the general post office presented accounts of the amount of money received by the different postmasters within the last year, and the balance now remaining in their hands. Ordered to be printed.

The annual accounts of the London Flour Company were presented, and ordered to lie on the table.

An account of the distribution of two million pounds sterling, which was voted in the last session towards the service of the year, was presented, and ordered to lie on the table.

A petition was presented from certain inhabitants of the borough of Chippenham, stating that a Select Committee had decided on the case of the late contested election for that borough, on principles which they with deference conceived to be

be materially different from the antient usage of that borough, and praying that they might be heard by their counsel on that head. The petition was ordered to be taken into consideration on Tuesday the 8th of May.

Mr. Dent gave notice that he would, after the recess, move that the House take into its consideration the situation of the holders of loyalty loan debentures.

On the order being read for the House resolving itself into a Committee on the bankers' indemnity bill,

Mr. Vansittart moved, that it be an instruction to the Committee, that they make a provision to extend the time of hearing appeals on surcharges made under the property tax.

Mr. *Prinsep* objected to the whole principle of the bill. He was of opinion, that many innocent persons would suffer by the passing of such a law, as they would not be able to make their returns within the proper time in many instances, where they resided at a distance in the country. It would be more regular for the agent, when he got his dividend warrant, to go into another office, pay the assessment, and obtain a certificate accordingly. If the principals had any claim to exemptions, they should prefer such claim themselves.

Mr. *Dent* said, that the bill only went to the prevention of an evil which it never was the intention of Government that the parties should suffer. If the measure was not adopted, the greatest inconvenience would ensue in transacting the business in the manner which the hon. Member had described. He then asked the right hon. Secretary if any other alteration was intended to be made after the holidays.

Mr. *Vansittart* declared that he was not at present aware of any such measure being in the contemplation of his Majesty's Ministers. If, however, any sufficient ground was stated, some other regulation might be adopted in the course of the session.

The bill was then passed through the Committee, the report received, and the bill ordered to be read a third time the next day.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer placed himself at the bar of the House, and presented a message from his Majesty, stating, That

“ His Majesty thought proper to acquaint the House of Commons, that the officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates of several regiments of Irish militia, had made a voluntary tender of their services to be employed in any part of Great Britain, during the war; that his Majesty had received with great satisfaction this striking proof of affection and attachment

tachment to his person and Government, and of their patriotic zeal for the general interest of the united kingdom; and conceiving that being enabled to avail himself of this patriotic offer might be attended with great advantage, his Majesty recommended it to his faithful Commons to adopt such regulations as might enable him to accept of the offers of such parts of the Irish militia as might be voluntarily disposed to serve in Great Britain, for such time and to such extent as to the wisdom of Parliament might seem expedient."

After the message had been read from the chair, the *Chancellor of the Exchequer* stated that he would refrain from making any comment at present, and content himself with moving, that his Majesty's most gracious message be taken into consideration on Wednesday next, when a right hon. Friend of his (*Mr. Secretary Yorke*) who was at present absent by indisposition, would submit a measure to the House for the purpose of augmenting the force of the country. The message was then ordered to be taken into consideration on Wednesday next.

Mr. Corry moved the order of the day for the recommitment of the Irish militia families bill.

On this a conversation arose between *Mr. Foster* and *Mr. Corry*, respecting the operations of the present and the former laws respecting the provision to be made for the families of militiamen in Ireland. A clause was presented by *Mr. Foster*, to authorize the payment of arrears which may be due from the first of November last, up to the present period, in order to make up the deficiency of the allowance which militiamen's families have received since that time. The clause was agreed to with some slight amendment.

The bill was passed through a Committee, and the report was ordered to be received the next day.

Mr. Foster said, that he would be glad to know when it was likely that the Irish accounts, which had been ordered some time since, would be laid before the House? There was so much tardiness and irregularity in the production of papers which related to that part of the empire, that he should think it his duty to move, after the recess, that the operation of the act, which regulates the delivery of public accounts relative to the affairs of England, should be extended to Ireland.

Mr. Corry assured the hon. Member that no pains were spared in the making out and delivery of those accounts. Two officers were then waiting outside of the door, for the purpose of delivering papers, and the others would be delivered with all possible expedition.

Mr.

Mr. Kinnaird moved, that there be laid before the House, accounts of the disposition of grants for the year 1803, stating what sums remain in the Exchequer, and what sums are yet to be raised under the various heads of loan, lottery, war taxes, and the interest on the sums payable for the redemption of the land tax, distinguishing each, up to the latest period. A general result of the surplus of 1,300,000*l.* was stated in the accounts upon the table, but he did not think that that was sufficiently explicit.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* had no objection to the production of the papers which had been specified, but at the same time assured the hon. Member, that he would not find the accuracy of the statements at present before the House, in any degree affected by the accounts he now moved for.

Mr. Kinnaird said, that in the present some of the accounts appeared to him to be a delusion on the public.

Mr. Vanflitart declared, that they were drawn up according to the usual method of framing such documents.

The accounts were then ordered to be laid before the House.

Accounts of the amount of salaries, which have been paid at par to officers on the Irish establishment resident in England since the union, were presented, and ordered to lie on the table.

The Committees of Supply and Ways and Means were postponed till Wednesday. Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

TUESDAY, MARCH 27.

The bills upon the table were forwarded in their respective stages.

Lord Elliot was sworn and took his seat, on his accession to the peerage by the demise of his father, the late Lord.

An account of the salaries, pensions, &c. paid by order of the Irish Government at par, within a given period, were, in pursuance of a former motion of Lord King, laid before the House. And the same were, on the motion of the noble Lord, ordered to be printed.

On the motion of Lord Auckland, a Committee of their Lordships was appointed to inquire into the best means of lighting and warming the House, improving the passages thereto, and the accommodations of the Lord Chancellor and other officers of the House.

VOL. II. 1803-4.

M m

VOLUNTEER

VOLUNTEER REGULATIONS BILL.

The order of the day for the second reading of this bill being read,

Lord Hawkebury rose, and delivered his sentiments upon the measure. He set out with calling the attention of their Lordships to what had transpired last session upon the subject, and the measures adopted by the Legislature thereon, and on which the present bill was founded. In discussing the subject, they were to consider the volunteer force merely in a relative point of view. With regard to the point which had been so repeatedly urged, that his Majesty's Government depended chiefly upon the volunteer force for the defence of the country, he must decidedly protest against it. The first general mode of defence, which they relied upon, was the regular established military force of the country. In viewing the state and preparation of this force at present, he would have to look comparatively at what it was in former periods of equal or nearly similar urgency; not in an invidious point of view, but merely to apprize their Lordships of the real facts of the case. There were at present not less than 180,000 regular troops in the united kingdom. The volunteer force, however, for general service, though it might be inferior to this, was, he contended, in some points of view, more efficacious than any other species of defensive force; it was intended to act, in general, as a subsidiary force. In this part of his discussion, the noble Lord took a view of the comparative advantages and disadvantages which the invaders possessed: one permanent advantage and great superiority which the latter had over the former was, that they could have an armed nation at their side, the manifold advantages of which could be more easily conceived than described. The known and established prerogative of the Crown, to call upon all the liege subjects of the realm to come forward and arm in defence thereof, in case of actual invasion, was certainly a consolatory and important consideration; but the difficulty lay in rendering the force thus acquired adequately successful without previous preparation. This principle Government had in view when they proposed legislative measures for arraying the national defence, and dividing the effective population of the country into distinct classes, which could be regularly recurred to, as the exigency should require. At the same time, with reference to measures connected with that under consideration, a suspending power was

was vested in the Crown, on such occasions as a certain proportionate number of volunteers should come forward in different parts of the kingdom. This species of force, being deemed upon the whole decidedly preferable to the other, which it was felt would be productive of numerous inconveniences to individuals, it was thought best to take advantage of that zeal and patriotic ardour which the volunteers manifested in freely coming forward in defence of their country; and under those considerations, wherever a certain proportion of volunteers were embodied, it was held unnecessary to carry the general defence act into execution. The number of volunteers at present in Great Britain alone, he was happy to inform the House, fell little short of 330,000. A force of this immense number was in itself not only of the highest importance, and an acquisition the advantages of which were almost incalculable; but it must necessarily be supposed to consist of such a variety of materials, and to involve so many various considerations, that the ground for astonishment fairly was, that so few difficulties were found to intervene in its organization and advance to its present state of discipline and efficacy. He then adverted to the idea of the utility of an armed peasantry, which had been insisted upon by some as so far preferable, as to justify the cancelling and disorganizing that part of the national force then under consideration. He was aware, that in some circumstances and situations an armed peasantry might be used with effect; but it was held a matter of great doubt in some of the most respectable military opinions in the country, whether a force of that description were best calculated for a contest of the nature of that in which we were embarked, and whether in all its different bearings and relations the force to which the bill before their Lordships referred was not far preferable. With respect to the contest, generally speaking, in which we are engaged, the wisest policy, especially with reference to the measure under consideration, would be to consider it as likely to be protracted, and the force in question, as one of which we could avail ourselves at any future period. Upon these general grounds, the system of regulations which the bill went to enact would, he thought, be the most advisable. The consideration of discipline should not be pushed to that extent as to render it inconvenient or harassing to individuals, or to interfere too much with their private or civil concerns. It had been contended that a third or a fourth part of the present amount, perfectly and regularly disciplined

and trained. would be preferable to the greater number moderately disciplined, and less trained to the use of arms; but this was very questionable. To take it in every point of view, in his estimation the system which the bill went to sanction was decidedly preferable. He then adverted to some prominent regulations in the bill, and expressed his opinion, that it was fair and proper that the conditions upon which the volunteers entered, should be scrupulously fulfilled on the part of Government, and such was certainly intended. With respect to the idea held out of the right of volunteers to elect their own officers, nothing, he observed, in the acts alluded to, tended to countenance such a position: the right in the case before them, was as absolutely and incontrovertibly vested in the Crown, as was that right in every description of military force; the language of the acts was, that the officers should be persons holding commissions from his Majesty, which clearly implied a discretionary power in the Crown. The noble Secretary then proceeded to describe the substance of the clauses and provisions of the bill, in which it is unnecessary for us to follow him. He admitted the measure unavoidably involved some anomalies, which were inseparable from a system of so various and extensive a nature. It was however important, in viewing the subject before them, their Lordships should bear in mind, that when in case of invasion any part of those volunteer forces was called out, they would be subject to the provisions of the mutiny bill and to martial law, which would tend, for the time, to perfect their efficacy, and to assimilate them to the regular troops. His Lordship spoke in terms of the highest satisfaction of the powerful military force which the exertions and policy of his Majesty's Government had established in the country, and which would be found to be numerous and effective beyond all former example. He instanced the case of the year 1798, when these islands, he said, were held to be in danger of invasion, the Government of that day boasted their accumulated force of 250,000 men. At the present period there were ready to meet the attack no fewer than 450,000 men in arms. The real question, however, he admitted was not whether comparatively more or less had been done, but whether enough had been done towards perfecting the national means of defence. He had pointedly to urge the adoption of the regulations provided by the present bill for the volunteer force of the country. His Lordship

ship concluded by moving, that the bill be then read a second time.

On the question being put,

The *Earl of Carnarvon* rose and said, I should have felt no objection to almost any system, whether of volunteers or armed peasantry, which could have added useful strength to the country at a moment when all its energies must be exerted, provided in its formation it had not a tendency to prejudice our more effectual and regular force, and the constitution of the country had not been unnecessarily impaired. A spirit and courage, more than equal to the dangers that threaten, has manifested itself in every class of people universally through every part of the country in a manner without example; and might have supplied his Majesty's Ministers with ample means of organizing some permanent system of defence, capable of resisting any attacks which our most inveterate enemies could make upon us now, or at any future period. But Ministers have been bewildered with the quantity of materials in their hands, and whatever advantages might have been derived from a volunteer system, have been lost by their mismanagement; they have so singularly arranged it, that it is incapable of being substantially amended in a Committee, and instead of a volunteer force which might have been firmly relied upon in the time of danger, they have erected a fabric which may dissolve before the moment of its use. They have encouraged and accepted offers, reserving to the corps the extraordinary power of withdrawing their services at pleasure, at any time before the appearance of the enemy; so that the danger may meet us, without force; and to this absurdity they have pledged the King's faith, and put it out of the power of a Committee to correct this error. This evil is further increased by a review of the curious fabrication of that which is peculiarly called the defence bill. I agree with the noble Secretary of State, that the merits of the volunteer system proposed to be amended by this bill, cannot be duly estimated but by a consideration of the general state of the defence of the country. I must therefore consider the defence act and the present bill as one, they are indeed so interwoven that they cannot be separated; the first is the reputed parent and heir of the latter, for the noble Secretary informs us, that the failure of the volunteer system, is to be replaced by the execution of the defence act, which is now placed on the shelf and remains a dead letter. This extraordinary

extraordinary act is founded on an assertion of an ancient prerogative of the Crown of which not the slightest proof was produced when the bill was urged with such precipitation through this House, that it passed in two days without the usual forms, as if discussion was dangerous. The assertion of this unknown though it seems undoubted prerogative, seems to have been intended for the sole purpose of making the extraordinary provisions of the bill appear to be deeply rooted in the ancient constitution of the country, lest the system adopted by the bill should appear as repugnant to mankind, namely, of blending all classes and conditions of men, from the Prince of Wales (the first subject) to the lowest beggar that infests the streets, in one common array as common soldiers equally serving in the ranks and liable to the most disgraceful punishment for offending the dignity and commands of a Chelsea pensioner serjeant or corporal to be placed over them, equally liable from the highest to the lowest to be transferred to the ranks of the regulars, militia, or fencibles. The Prince of Wales, if he had not fortunately been colonel of a regiment of dragoons, would have found that his station in the country, when its dangers call every man to his post, is decided by this act to be in the ranks, a common soldier, looking to corporal's rank as promotion. No man but those who formed this plan could believe such an impracticable system of folly could have suggested itself as a serious system of defence to a set of men calling themselves statesmen, or could expect a facility in its execution, introduced by the assertion of a prerogative which never existed nor could now be put into execution. But in truth this system was not so much calculated or intended to be acted upon, as to create a terror which should have the effect of raising volunteers *by compulsion*, on whom the framers of the bill placed their ultimate trust for the defence of the country. The whole structure of the defence bill marks that this forced body of volunteers was the object of an act which has ultimately lodged in the Crown a power which is subversive of the constitution of the country and the liberties of all classes. By this ingenious contrivance it was expected that volunteers would come forward to protect their neighbours from the oppressive operation of the act, and being so produced would make a better defence against the enemies than an army composed by the act of persons whose education, habits of life and inclination revolted against the position in which they were placed by force. The framers of the bill might have in vain waited for any extensive army of volunteers raised

raised by the sole desire of protecting their neighbours from similar service, unless purchased by them so to do (which might also have been intended by the act): but the spirit and courage of the nation outstrip the operation, or even the consideration of the bill, and rendered a force in the true and genuine spirit of patriotism, raised by indignation at the threats of an implacable enemy, and by attachment to their king and country. The ultimate resource, however, in the failure of the volunteers, must be to the impracticable operation of the defence bill; I am therefore against the whole system, and against this bill as a part, and am against its being committed.

Lord Ellenborough said, that if he had not been used to hear the most monstrous propositions, he should have thought it impossible that any person should gravely express a doubt of the prerogative in the King to require the assistance of his liege subjects in case of an invasion; it must go along with the feeling of every man, even if he had not given himself the pains to examine into the statutes and rolls of Parliament, which would have soon convinced him that no doubt could arise in the mind of those most disposed to receive them, of the existence of this prerogative. The power of requiring the military service of every man against the invasion of an enemy, must in every civilized country exist somewhere, and it could not be placed in any hands but those of the sovereign head of the state. The country must be without defence unless such power could be resorted to: whoever had the right to make war, must have the power to carry it on; and if the noble Lord had been at the trouble of reading the acts, he would have found that in the 13th of Edward I. all men, according to their faculties, are ordered to provide themselves with arms. The learned Lord then read out of the statute, "It is commanded that every man have in his house harness to keep the peace after the antient assize, that is to say, every man between 15 and 60 years shall be assessed and sworn to armour according to their quantity of lands and goods;" and he also read an act of the 1st of Edward III. chap. 5th, in these words: "No man shall be charged to arm himself otherwise than he was wont, and no man shall be compelled to go out of his shire but when necessity requireth, and sudden coming of strange enemies into the realm, and then it shall be done, as hath been used in time past for the defence of the realm." His Lordship observed, that it was impossible

to read this act and withhold conviction of the existing prerogative to call out every man upon the coming of strange enemies into the land ; and if more proof was required, the commission of array which was referred to the consideration of Parliament, in the 5th of Henry IV. would prove the existence of this very prerogative. It was immaterial that the act of Henry IV. was repealed, the commission contained the prerogative under which it was issued. The proposition must be so evident from these words, that the noble and learned Lord thought it would be wasting their Lordships' time to dwell longer upon the subject.

The *Earl of Carnarvon* replied, that he had not received the conviction which he had expected from the great knowledge and abilities of the learned Lord, of whose talents no person had a higher opinion than himself ; and though I have not (said the noble Earl) the presumption to oppose my judgment to his on legal subjects, or to enter the lists with him in the discussion of legal antiquities, yet I should be sorry that the noble Lord should think that I have lightly and without examination formed an opinion on this important subject, and I will therefore state my reasons for retaining the same opinion after all that the noble Lord has said. I am very ready to admit as an axiom of law extending over all the civilized world, that the power to require the military service of all men (according to their stations) on the invasion of the kingdom by a foreign enemy, must exist somewhere, and that it cannot exist in any other hands but where the sovereign power of the country resides ; but I do not draw the same inference as the noble Lord does, that it is therefore (by force of the principle contained in the axiom) placed in the hands of the King, in this country, where the monarchy is limited, and the sovereign power is in many instances divided between the three states ; nor is it pretended that the King is entitled to all powers which may be necessary to carry on a war into which he has an undoubted right to enter. Whoever, therefore, asserts the former existence of a prerogative, now in disuse, is certainly bound to prove it beyond doubt. The learned Lord began with citing the 13th of Edward I. chap. 6th, as if it made part of the military system of that age for the defence of the country against foreign enemies, or was intended to arm the King's hands for war. Without going further into the act, than the noble Lord has read, it is obviously a provision of arms to keep the peace, and not to carry
on

on war; and in the conclusion of the act it enjoins sheriffs and constables "to take heed that those so armed follow the hue and cry of the country;" and the title given to the act is—"for the *view of arms to follow the hue and cry*;" and nothing is so clear as that this is the meaning of this act, and to this day no person is exempt from following the hue and cry of their respective counties: and if any doubt could subsist whether this act made part of the general system of offence and defence against foreign enemies, the act of the 4th of Henry IV. chap. 13th, puts it out of doubt, by omitting this act, when it recites and confirms all the other subsisting acts, which do clearly relate to the general military system. The noble Lord has omitted to read this act of 4 Henry IV. which distinctly proves that no person (whatever encroachment of prerogative may have been attempted) could be called upon for military service, but by tenure, and assent and grant of Parliament. The act of the 4th Henry IV. chap. 13th, runs in these words: "It is ordained and established that the statute made in the 1st year of King Edward III. grandfather to our Lord the King that now is, containing that none shall be constrained to go out of their counties but only for cause of necessity and sudden coming of strange enemies into the realm; and the statute made in the 10th year of the said grandfather, chap. 7, That men of arms, archers, and hoblers, chosen to go on the King's service out of England, shall be at the King's wages from the day they do depart out of the counties where they were chosen; and also the statute made the 25th year of the said grandfather, That no man be compelled to find men of arms, archers, nor hoblers, other than those which do hold by such service, unless it be by common assent and grant of Parliament, be firmly holden and kept in all points." This statute is made to resist encroachments made since the passing those acts which it revives (as if disused) by recital and confirmation. The first, is that read by the learned Lord, and is a proof that no enemy being in the land, those who owed service to the King, had been harassed by not paying their wages; and the last states the law of the land respecting the military system of those days, as if against these encroachments, that no man of arms, &c. should be compellable *unless by tenure, or consent of Parliament*. Nothing can be more clear and explicit than the words of this last statute, which places the military power of the Crown on its undoubted basis, namely, the *military tenures*,

nures, and authority of Parliament. It must be observable, that if any prerogative can be inferred from these statutes, the statute should not be capable of being expounded any other way, but by the supposition of such a prerogative, namely, that of calling all men out of their counties on the appearance of a foreign enemy, without assent of Parliament; but this statute is perfectly intelligible, and applicable to the military tenures known and acknowledged to exist at the time, and therefore this act cannot presume any such prerogative. No man is so little read in the history of this country, as not to know that, from the conquest, the land was divided into 60,000 knights' fees, productive of 60,000 men, for 40 days military service, at the King's pleasure; and that this large military force continued in strict practical use by personal service, until Henry the Second's time, when a relaxation of personal service began to insinuate itself, and the introduction of substituted service, and gradually a commutation by escuage certain by agreement, and uncertain when no such agreement was made, took place; and that the last gave occasion to great oppression by the claim of unlimited penalties, which rose to so great a grievance, that in King John's time it was reprobated by Magna Charta in the words, if I remember right, "*Nullum scutagium ponatur in regno nostro nisi per commune consilium regni.*" So circumstanced the tenures with their services or escuage continued till their abolition by the 12th Charles II. and the establishment of an extensive militia under Lords Lieutenants of counties and their respective deputies, and that this continued until the existence of the present militia, with the occasional introduction of a more regular and permanent army. In all this period, nothing like the prerogative asserted has been acknowledged. The preamble of the 13th of Charles II. which reprobates the assumption of the command of the militia by Parliament in the preceding reign, and declares the King's right to command all forces raised, does not insinuate the power of raising such force by the King's prerogative on any occasion. I am at a loss on this view of the military history to trace any ground on which such a prerogative can have taken root; but I am sure that the acts can be explained by reference to the facts known from history, without having recourse to an uncertain prerogative. The learned Lord is certainly more conversant in the channels through which information of this nature can be traced than I am, and

and he has been more successful in finding the commission of array which he has cited, which he says *passed the Legislature* in the 5th of Henry IV. No such statute appears on the statute book, though (on finding an assertion of such a commission) I have searched for it. The commission of array, in whatever words it may be couched, would not be convincing to my mind, as I am well aware that the times were productive of incroachments of that sort. The act of 1st Edward III. chap. 7th, states, that commissions have been awarded to certain people of shires, to prepare men of arms, &c. and enacts that it shall be done so no more. The act of the 1st Edward III. chap. 15th; states, that by evil counsellors the King had bound people by writing, to raise armed men, and forbids it. Frequent attempts to raise an army by commission may have been made, and perhaps submitted to at times, and at times reprobated. With respect to that to which the noble Lord has alluded, and which I have not seen, I can only observe, that by his own account of it, it must have derived its authority *from Parliament*, and *not from prerogative*. The execution of the ordinances of Parliament is always intrusted to the King; and it appears also on the face of the statement, that this commission in Parliament the 5th of Henry IV. was only the year following the act of 4th Henry IV. cited by me, which as distinctly as words can convey their meaning, declares "that no man shall be constrained to find men of arms, hoblers, (horsemen) or archers, others than those who hold by such services, if not by common assent and grant of Parliament." The commission cannot therefore be supposed to contradict the parliamentary doctrine of the year before, and its being contained in an act of Parliament, is a proof that it was in conformity to the doctrine of the preceding year, and derived its authority from Parliament, and not from prerogative.

Lords Morton and Hobart called the noble Earl to order; to which he replied, that if he had been called to order sooner, he should have insisted on his right to put the House into a Committee, which the standing orders of the House permitted him to do, but that he had nearly finished all he had wished to say, and should not trouble the House further.

The clerk read the order, which was as the noble Earl had stated.

Lord King delivered his sentiments generally upon the measure before the House, and censured the conduct of Ministers

with respect to the volunteers. The bill itself he regarded as a mass of incongruity and absurdities, which he thought to be the general character of all the measures adopted by Ministers upon the subject. The point of view in which the bill was that night held out, was by no means a fair one; the injurious effects of the measure, as at present constituted, were kept out of sight; it had the effect of counteracting, not only the regular army, but the militia force, and the army of reserve: this was principally done by means of the exemptions; the militia, and the army of reserve also, in a great degree, counteracted each other. In proof of the volunteer system materially affecting the recruiting service, he referred to the state of recruiting in those parts of the kingdom where the volunteers were proportionably the most numerous, as in Kent, Surrey, and the metropolis. With respect to the bill, he repeated, it was a mass of incongruity—every separate part was jarring one with the other, and the whole was in the teeth of every systematic regulation.

Lord Boringdon said that he would give no opinion as to the legal point at issue between the noble Earl and the noble and learned Lord, relative to the asserted right of the King to call for the military service of all his subjects in case of invasion. He did not know that Ministers had put forth this right at the end of the last session, with a view to compel men to enter into the volunteer service; but he could confirm from his own observation the statement of the noble Earl, that such in many cases was the effect of that doctrine. He differed materially in opinion from the noble Lord who spoke first as to the present efficiency of the volunteers, and as to the danger which might be apprehended from the volunteers being disposed to disband themselves in case of a protracted contest. The dangers to be incurred in such a contest would, he thought, arise from the character and complexion of his Majesty's present Government, and not from any want of patriotism or perseverance on the part of the volunteers, whose conduct was beyond all praise. He thought the present bill wholly inadequate to the circumstances of the country, and to the evils which it pretended to remedy: nevertheless he should not oppose it, as it contained some provisions which must have a salutary operation: the provision giving the same allowance to the families of volunteers on service, as was given to those of militiamen, and that which gave to the commanding officer a control over his men at drill, deserved commendation, and no time should be lost

lost in carrying them into effect. After the numberless blunders and contradictions of his Majesty's Ministers in carrying this system into effect during last year, no great hope could be entertained, that a bill containing in it as little as the present bill could ensure us from further difficulties.

The Bishop of *Landaff* spoke as follows:—My Lords, I have no intention of troubling your Lordships at great length; I have little, or to speak more properly, I have no military knowledge; but I love my country, and I cannot see it tottering on the extremest verge of destruction, without uttering a cry however faint, without stretching out an arm however feeble, to prevent its fall. The die, my Lords, is in the air, may God direct its fall in our favour! The die is in the air which, by its fall, will indicate the ruin of Bonaparte or of Britain; which will indicate the consequent reduction of France within its ancient limits; or the consequent reduction of all the states of Europe under the military yoke of the French Republic. To avert this catastrophe from ourselves requires, not so much, I think, the co-operation of certain individuals, however honourable in principle, however eminent in ability, (and no one thinks of their honour or of their ability more respectably than I do) but this co-operation is not so much required in the present circumstances of the country, as an entire, cordial, disinterested concurrence of all the talents in the empire. I am far from insinuating, my Lords, that those who may thus co-operate are influenced by any selfish views, by any ambitious prospects of place or power; no, on my conscience I am of opinion, that their primary object is the salvation of the country. Nor, on the other hand, do I take upon me to impute to the Administration, what has been so abundantly laid to their charge, inability—I at least have no public document, no private knowledge of them, which enables me to form a proper judgment. But if they have been guilty of mistakes, surely the novelty and unparalleled difficulty of their situation will with many, at least it will with me, plead their excuse.—With respect to the volunteer bill now before the House, this is not the time to enter into any discussion of its several provisions; nor is it now a question to be debated, whether the volunteer system is the best possible system which could have been devised for the defence of the country—it is the system which has been adopted, so it cannot now be abandoned with safety. I own I have always considered it as a system most noble in its prin-

principle; most difficult in its execution; and most successful, I trust it will be found, in its operation. No country in the world has ever given a stronger proof of the patriotism of its inhabitants, than the volunteers of Great Britain have given. They consist not of an indebted, discontented, miserable rabble of the country, but of men of rank, of men of letters, of men of property, of respectable yeomen, tradesmen, manufacturers, of all descriptions of reputable persons, from the peer to the peasant, from the enlightened statesman to the political peruser of a weekly newspaper or monthly magazine—all are animated with an ardent zeal to defend their country. And why, my Lords, are they all animated with this zeal? because all know that there is not now, nor ever was a country on the globe, in which all enjoy, in their several stations, the various blessings of civilized society, so securely and so abundantly as every individual enjoys in this. This is the knowledge which has excited and carried to an unexampled height the spirit of volunteering. This spirit is not a vain, frivolous, holiday kind of spirit delighted with military parade—it is not a frowzy, capricious spirit, disdaining reproof, regulation, and restraint.—No, it is a manly spirit of enlightened patriotism, which is sensible that to produce its proper effect it stands in need of, and ought to submit to instruction, discipline and direction. But supposing the volunteer system to be brought by the wisdom of your Lordships and the other House of Parliament, united with that of his Majesty's Ministers, to the utmost degree of perfection of which it is capable, another question presents itself,—is it sufficient for our protection? I am not able to answer this question, nor, so precarious are the events of war, is any man able to answer it with certainty; but supposing that it is not sufficient, what need is there for our despair? There are abundant resources to supply the deficiency of the volunteer system. Do you want arms? Why not put all the gunsmiths, sword cutlers, and blacksmiths in the empire into requisition, till you have procured all the muskets, swords, and pikes, which are wanted? Do you want men? Why not call out (for I am clearly of opinion that the King has a right to call out) every man in the country, not already enrolled in its defence, and capable of bearing arms, putting into the hands of these men the arms which you shall have prepared? Do you want horses? Why not put in requisition every coach and saddle horse in the empire, to be trained and fitted

fitted for the various purposes of war? No man on such an occasion will grudge to transact his business on foot; your Lordships will be proud to set the example by walking down to this House; and the sex, I speak it to their honour, will on such an occasion be content to stay at home. Do you want ships? Why not hire all the merchantmen and small craft, which can be speedily fitted for your purpose? As to large ships, let our enemies build them, and let us trust to our gallant admirals and the tars of old England, to conduct them into the ports of Great Britain. Do you want money? Scruple not the imposition of taxes at this moment. Property is the creature of civil society; the State has a right to all individual property if it is wanted for the general safety; and as the money, thus raised, will circulate amongst ourselves, wealth may chance to change hands, but the nation will not be impoverished. These or measures such as these, if brought forward with promptitude and executed with vigour, may, when modified by parliamentary wisdom, save the country. I dread the genius, I dread the power, I dread the intrigue of the enemy, and above all, I dread the effect of that political paralysis, with which, by his arms and by his intrigues, he has deadened the activity of every cabinet on the Continent—Yet I firmly rely on the courage, and on the unanimity of this country to repel an invasion. Of this country did I say? I certainly meant to include Ireland in my idea; the testimony which she yesterday gave us, in his Majesty's message, of her attachment to us, warmed my heart; it put to flight from my imagination the terrors excited by the apprehension of an hundred thousand Frenchmen. No personal services, no privation of luxuries, no diminution of property ought to be complained of while we are struggling for our existence as a free people. For my own part I had rather live upon oat bread and water, and be shod with the wooden clogs of Westmoreland for the rest of my life, as a free subject of this limited monarchy, than be pampered with all the delicacies, cockered with all the luxuries of this luxurious town, as a slave of the French Republic.

The *Earl of Darnley* made a variety of observations upon the measure under consideration. He condemned a great part of the conduct of Ministers with respect to the volunteer system; yet conceived, that under the present circumstances of the country, the bill contained some beneficial provisions which ought speedily to be carried into effect. There was little of system, he observed, in the conduct of Ministers relative

relative to the subject in question; and as to some points, on which the idea of a breach of faith was held forth, he thought it could not well apply, when the many allowances, and the unlimited power of resignation were considered. His Lordship animadverted upon some of the detailed provisions of the bill respecting maintenance and discipline, but observed, there were many important considerations connected with the bill, which could more regularly be discussed in the Committee.

Lord Romney entered into a general defence of the volunteer system, and of the zeal, ardour, and courage of those who composed it. He contended that a force had been raised greater than ever had before been known in this country; and though they certainly had not the discipline of complete regular troops, yet they were a description of force which would enable this country to look with contempt upon the attacks of the enemy. With respect to this bill, he thought it contained many regulations which would tend to improve and meliorate that system; and, therefore, he should give it his entire support.

The Duke of Somerset—My Lords, I mean to trouble your Lordships with but very few words upon this question. In giving my vote for the second reading of this bill, I would not be understood to give a full and unqualified approbation to the volunteer system. My reason for wishing that system to be continued is, that it has been carried so far. I should think it dangerous to attempt to change it for any other, at a time when the enemy is so near, and so soon to be expected. As to the expediency of submitting to any burthen, or any measure, however grievous, in preference to falling under French tyranny, I perfectly agree with the learned prelate. For me to enter into a discussion of the various topics connected with this question, after so much has been already said upon it, would be to intrude upon your Lordships' time. My object in rising, was merely to state my reason for assenting to the second reading of this bill; and to restrict, in some degree, the approbation which I shall certainly give, to a continuation of the volunteer system.

The Earl of Fife said, the question then before their Lordships was, that the bill be read a second time. He said that he could not help observing, there had been great irregularity in the debate, by almost entirely departing from the question. He assured their Lordships that he should not take up much of their time. He was too far advanced in life to have any object

object in speaking, but from public duty. He would not waste time in complimenting Ministers on the wisdom of their measures, having very little acquaintance with any of them, except from official correspondence, and he did not even know who were their opposers; he rose as an old volunteer, feeling it his indispensable duty to do justice to that species of force, which upon every occasion had acted with honour and spirit. He said he could not but regret, that many reflections had been thrown out in speeches and in publications against the volunteer system (which term he should use notwithstanding it had been disapproved of by a noble Lord), some from ignorance and folly, and others, he was afraid, from worse principles. His Lordship was confident that the most malicious insinuations would not raise a jealousy between the volunteers and regular army; it was their joint honour and interest to support each other. The numerous body of volunteers all over this kingdom, certainly must appear to our enemies a formidable bulwark of defence of our King, our Constitution, our Religion, and every thing dear to us.—He had great experience last war in raising volunteers in the county where he has the honour to be Lord Lieutenant. He has at this time a very considerable number, and might have had a great many more, had Government accepted of the offers; and he was proud to say during all that period he never had occasion to make a complaint to the War Office but one, and that was of a captain returning a lieutenant present when absent, and he was superseded. His Lordship was of opinion that the volunteers certainly had the power of resigning, but at the same time he was fully convinced that they would never desire to exercise that right so long as their country required their services; and he said he should have regretted it extremely had any measure been adopted which should make any alteration in their voluntary and patriotic offers. He was happy to have this opportunity of complimenting a noble and learned Lord on a decision which had done him great honour and given universal satisfaction. At the same time, with all the attachment which his Lordship said he had to the volunteer system, he could never agree to allow the men the power of choosing their own officers: he had heard of the existence of such a practice, but in the part of the country he was connected with, it had never been heard of or thought of; no practice appeared to him to be more dangerous. His Lordship coincided perfectly in the sentiments so ably stated by a Reverend Prelate,

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which it was unnecessary for him to repeat.—He concluded by saying, that there were many clauses in the Bill before the House which he highly approved of, and therefore gave it his entire support.

Lord Grenville began by expressing his satisfaction that those who found it their duty to oppose the bill, were not now supposed to be enemies to the volunteer system. It would indeed be strange, that those who had used the utmost exertions to consolidate that system, should for a moment be considered as individuals who wished it to be dissolved, even under the present critical circumstances of the empire. No man, he would affirm, could entertain a higher idea than he did of the zeal, the energy and the spirit of the people of England, and no idea could be more monstrous than to suppose that four hundred thousand volunteers, who had stepped forward in defence of the liberties and independence of their country, would not be found capable of the most important services. It was not that he doubted of the courage of the volunteers of England, but it was keeping in view, that those whom they were to encounter were troops of undoubted courage, and who had enjoyed the advantage of a degree of discipline obtained in not less than twelve campaigns, in which they were opposed to all the best disciplined troops in Europe. With the knowledge of the enemy to be opposed, it was undoubtedly the duty of Ministers to have directed their principal attention to that description of force which was to be encountered. In the present bill his Lordship declared that he saw not the slightest evidence of a regular military system. Since the commencement of the war, he had hitherto seen no evidence of a system adequate to the crisis in which we were placed, the various parts of which had any reasonable degree of relation or connection. What he had principally to object to the volunteer system, as it at present stood, was, that it had stood in the way of every other department of the national defence. The recruiting not merely of the regulars, but the filling up of the militia, had been materially affected by the provision which the bill now contained. A noble Lord opposite had stated one fact, which effectually proved the assertion which he had submitted to their Lordships' consideration. The fact to which he referred was, that in the county of Kent, at the breaking out of the war, there were not more than thirty-seven individuals embodied out of the whole quota required for that district. Could there, he desired to ask their Lordships, be a more decisive

cisive proof of the improvidence and culpable neglect of Ministers? Was it not admitted that the peace was not considered to be lasting? Was it not allowed by Ministers themselves that, during the short interval of peace, the whole conduct of the enemy had been one uniform system of violence and aggression? On what principle it was, then, that the Ministers disbanded the militia, or were so backward in re-embodiment of them, he could not pretend to decide. Their conduct in this instance, was hardly reconcilable to any of the ordinary principles of human affairs. It was a subject of considerable interest to look to the successive measures of Ministers for the defence of the country. The first in any point of view calculated to secure the augmentation of the regular army, was the bill for raising the army of reserve. But how was the operation of this act encouraged by subsequent proceedings? The conduct of Ministers was characterised by their usual confusion and irregularity. They immediately introduced the general defence act, and much time was employed in reducing this measure to any degree of consistency. Hardly two days elapsed, before in two or three lines the whole measure is rendered nugatory. Ministers take on themselves to hold forth that voluntary offers of service, shall be commuted for the provisions of the general training act. Not contented with this, they introduce a most extensive and unparalleled system of exemptions. They go so far as to introduce into a volunteer bill, provisions exempting not only from the ballots for the militia and army of reserve, then in existence, but from all ballots which might afterwards be appointed by a solemn act of the Legislature. What the effect of such a system was, he needed not to enlarge on. It must be obvious to every noble Lord who took the trouble to exercise his judgment on the subject, that such provisions were utterly incompatible with the existence of a regular army. He desired their Lordships to reflect on what had been done for the military defence of the country since the commencement of the present session of Parliament.—About five months had already elapsed, and all that had hitherto been brought forward to perfect our military system was, to lay on the table of their Lordships a bill which he must be forgiven in pronouncing altogether nugatory. It struck him that the bill was quite inefficient to any great object, not only from the absence of many important provisions, but from the presence of others which were not only useless, but, in his view, highly reprehensible.

hensible. How far the present objectionable clauses might be removed or amended he would not now pretend to decide, though he certainly had no very sanguine hope that even, after every effort to improve it, the bill could be rendered adequate to any great permanent object. Considered as a separate measure, it was altogether inefficient. Viewed as a part of a whole, it was utterly incompatible with every other part of the system applicable to the crisis in which the country was placed. He was hardly required to repeat what he had said at the outset of his observations, that he had the most perfect reliance on the zeal and spirit of the volunteers in every part of the empire: at the same time he could not help saying, that the species of force most applicable to the national dangers was that which Ministers were in duty bound to bring forward with the least possible delay. Of the courage of the volunteers it was impossible to entertain a doubt; and after the previous experience which had been obtained of the service of the militia, no man would pretend that they were not to be considered as a most important part of our national defence. Ministers, however, ought to have properly balanced the means of uniting and harmonizing the application of these different establishments, so as in the least probable degree to interfere with the military force of the country. So far, however, from having pursued this system, Ministers had sacrificed the regular army to establishments undoubtedly highly useful in themselves, but not applicable to circumstances of extraordinary danger. Instead of any encouragement being held out to the regular army, it had been thwarted, opposed and embarrassed. He allowed all due praise to the spirit of the volunteers and the militia, but he was desirous that they should be viewed on their proper footing. As to the army of reserve, he saw them in no other light generally than as a depôt of recruits for the regular army. Some degree of triumph appeared to be entertained as to the present state of our military establishment. He could not imagine that the noble Lord opposite would persist in holding such language. As the best answer to any statement of that nature, he should wish to be informed what augmentation had been gained for the regular army since the commencement of the last session. He did not at all mean to deny that the militia, as applicable to local service, might be viewed as to a considerable degree efficient. He was so far from wishing to hold them up in any inferior light, that one of his great objections

jections to the bill was, that the filling up of the quotas for the militia had, by the provisions of the bill, been materially retarded. What he objected to was, that service in a volunteer corps protected not against one ballot for the militia, but against all ballots, even before the militia were completed. He begged leave to say, that the system pursued by Ministers on this subject was essentially different from that pursued during the late war. He did not deny that the volunteer establishment, during the late war, was one which admitted of exemptions from the militia ballots, but the exemption was given under quite different circumstances. During the late war the exemptions given to the volunteers succeeded the embodying of the militia, whereas, as the exemptions now stood, they accompanied and materially interfered with the filling up of the militia. But he begged leave to state that this was not only the case during the late war, when the volunteers were first established, but after it was judged necessary to extend their numbers. Previous to this augmentation, the supplementary militia had been called for, and it was not till this additional force was filled up that further offers of voluntary service were accepted. The exemptions given to the volunteers were really far beyond any idea which was entertained on the subject. Hardly two days elapsed after the general training act had been passed, before, by the single clause of a commutation for voluntary service, the whole act was virtually rescinded. He believed that the public at large knew nothing of this most extraordinary alteration. He could on his own behalf state, that though only at a distance of twenty-six miles from the metropolis, he knew nothing of the matter, and that he first was apprised of this new bill while he was busy in explaining the provisions of the general training act, and pointing out the superiority of voluntary offers of service. No sooner was it seen that a deficiency of volunteers was likely to be experienced than Ministers made known their views of these extended exemptions. The volunteer system unexpectedly increased much beyond what they thought necessary; and here again they stepped in to check and embarrass the exertions and enthusiasm of the people. The people were to be perpetually trifled with, and when volunteers did not appear in sufficient numbers, they were to be brought forward by threats of the general training bill. It was not at all his object to dispute, under particular circumstances, the right of the Sovereign to call out the population

population of the country. He must, however, strongly object to the clause in the bill, by which that power was defined. As the clause now stood, the power professed to be vested in the Crown was monstrous and unconstitutional beyond all previous example. He could not pretend to be so well versed as a noble and learned Lord who had preceded him, in what had been very properly styled the antiquity of law. Some of the cases cited by the learned Lord, did however appear to him quite inapplicable to the present age, and the present circumstances of this country. Much stress had been laid on the authority of Vattel, whose Treatise on the Law of Nations he had heard repeatedly styled a repository of the lumber of antiquity. He would not enter the lists with the noble Lord as to the constitutional opinions entertained in the time of Henry III. and Edward I. with respect to the power of the Sovereign to call out the population of the country. He did not controvert the doctrine of the Sovereign's right generally stated. In the present age, however, it was not to be received without a certain degree of limitation. It was the act not of the Sovereign personally, but of the Sovereign acting under the sanction and authority of Parliament. This was the only intelligible use of the right in a country professing to be governed by a system of laws fairly and justly administered. When the power was exercised at all, it was to be generally and justly applied. It was not to be made the instrument of injustice, of partiality, or revenge. To suppose that it could be exercised in this way, would be to subvert the whole system of a free government. To pretend that the prerogative of the Crown extended so far as that any individuals could at pleasure be transferred, either to a regiment of the line, or to a militia regiment, was a position altogether monstrous and abominable. It was objected, and justly, to the odious and tyrannical Government of France, that the people were liable to be driven to every species of military service. With what propriety then could Ministers call on the people of this country to stand forth in defence of our constitution, if the monstrous power to which he had now alluded was sanctioned? His Lordship contended, that a clause in the bill did sanction such a power, and that this was the first instance of such an arbitrary arrangement in the whole annals of the country. He wished to know from what source such an odious doctrine was derived. It could not derive its origin from the feudal times, for there the terms of service were expressly limited. Was it from the

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the example of the issuing of commissions of array? He conceived that it would be wasting time to shew, that these commissions afforded no argument for the unconstitutional power granted by the bill. At the commencement of the civil wars such a power was contended for by the Crown lawyers; but all the ablest legal authorities of that day resisted it. So convinced was the King of the illegality of the power, that it was not acted upon in any instance. After the Restoration it was not attempted to be carried into practice, and militia laws were soon after substituted in its room. His Lordship, after forcibly insisting on this constitutional point, concluded by declaring, that the bill was very far from meeting his approbation. He however declined entering on minor points till a future stage.

The *Lord Chancellor*, in answer to the noble Lord who had just sat down, insisted that many objections of the noble Lord were irrelevant to the present stage of the bill. The question was not in regard to the propriety of the volunteer system as it generally stood, but whether the bill now before the House ought to be read a second time as a bill designed to regulate and amend that system. The propriety of the general principle had been recognised by former bills, and did not therefore admit of much animadversion. It was impossible for him to confine himself, his Lordship said, to the narrow limits he could have wished, from the turn the debate had taken. All the talents of the noble Lord, and all the talents connected with that noble Lord, or that were engaged with the former Administration, could not, his Lordship was persuaded, have effected a more perfect or more complete system than that now introduced by the bill. To shew that such a force was necessary, as could not have been immediately raised, or so expeditiously raised by the regular way, his Lordship only requested the House to turn their attention to the circumstances that attended the resolution of this country to enter again into the war. All circumstances considered, it could not have been in the power of the noble Lord, or in the power of those who conducted the last war, to have raised a more efficient or a more numerous force in the same time. It was not fair, his Lordship contended, to criticize the measures of any Administration with that severity with which the noble Lord had attacked the present Administration. On the same principle, what might he not say of the former Administration to which that noble Lord had belonged, and to which he himself was inclined

elined to attach the greatest respect? It was impossible that in such circumstances as existed, any measures could have been adopted to produce more beneficial or more extensive effects than the present volunteer system was calculated to produce. No man, it was true, could deny, that a strong and numerous regular force was desirable and better in many respects than volunteers; but it must be allowed also at the same time that such a regular force could not so easily, nor in so short a time be raised to an amount equal to the efficiency of the volunteers. Had not the present Administration, in this instance, acted upon the same principle as had been acknowledged last war? Should ever the volunteers be called into action, he had no doubt that their exertions would do honour to their country, and be a source of glory to themselves. Not a man among them, he believed, would survive a defeat. But the proper time, his Lordship argued, to take the different topics under consideration, was in the Committee of the House, and not in the present stage of the bill, as none of the objections went so far as to deny the general principle. The noble Lord then noticed what had been advanced by Lord Greenvile on the royal prerogative, to call out the people in case of actual danger. Against the restrictions which the noble Lord had imposed on that prerogative, he entered his most solemn protest, and argued the propriety of this prerogative, from the necessity of the case in which it was supposed to be exercised. This prerogative was claimed only in case of invasion, and the good of the country and the safety of the people would then require such a sacrifice, even independent of the law of the case. His Lordship here put a case, that should an invasion be made and a landing effected when Parliament was not sitting, and at a time perhaps, when Parliament could not constitutionally sit, what would be the result should this prerogative of the Crown be suspended, or even so limited as to render it ineffective? If not a principle of law, let it now be made so, It would be difficult, however, to make it otherwise while it must be recognised in certain instances, as a principle of necessity or expedience.

Lord Grenville said, he had never contended that the Sovereign had not a right, in cases of invasion, to require the services of his liege subjects, because that the King had a right, representing the community, to call, in such a case of extreme necessity, upon the services of all his subjects for the public defence, was not only a constitutional principle, but
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formed a part of the essence of civil society. The thing that he objected to was this, that the bill, in carrying this principle into execution, gave the Crown a power, not to call upon the whole or any class of the people, but upon any individual, and to place him in any regiment of the line or militia.

The *Lord Chancellor* was glad the noble Lord had admitted so much, as it narrowed the question very considerably; but even that exercise of the prerogative, defined as it had been, to which the noble Lord objected, it would be difficult, he thought, to prove incompatible with the rights of the Crown.

Earl Spencer thought that the volunteer system as it stood, could not meet the approbation of the House. He was by no means an enemy to volunteer corps. He had had the honour of belonging to one since the year 94, the period of their first formation; but he thought that Administration had begun at the wrong end, and instead of rendering the volunteers an auxiliary force as they were intended, had, by the exemptions introduced, crippled the regular service. So much was this the case, that the noble Lord (the *Lord Chancellor*), whose ingenuity was generally acknowledged, had been obliged to have recourse to old arguments to support the measure. He was no enemy in general to the argument *ad hominem*, but he thought it was introduced with a very bad grace on the present occasion. Whatever might be the principle of the provisionary cavalry under the former Administration, he could not see the application of it in the present instance. Of the provisionary cavalry act, his Lordship said, he himself had had the honour to approve, but under circumstances and under regulations very different from the present act.

Lord Hobart was glad that, on the whole, the bill had met with so little opposition. The volunteer corps, as they stood at the end of the late war, had been brought under no positive system, and some provisions were absolutely necessary to render them more efficient. From the regulations proposed by the bill now before the House, the greatest advantages, his Lordship was confident, would be derived. The principle on which the bill proceeded was by no means new. The act of 1802 went not less than the present to encourage the volunteers. The noble Lord then drew a comparison between the present force of the country, and that under the former Administration, for whom he professed

the greatest respect. A greater force, it was true, was now necessary, and therefore the means of raising that force were necessarily more extended. From the returns of the office with which he was connected, there were at the end of the last war, 175,000 regulars and militia, and upwards of 168,000 volunteers; whereas, now, there were above 628,000 effective men. The measures that had been taken were calculated to give confidence to the country, and to assure every man that there was nothing to be feared even from the loudest threats of the enemy. The force of the country in fact was such as to enable every man to look forward with tranquillity and confidence to the enjoyment of the advantages of our happy constitution.

The *Duke of Montrose* thought that it had not been attempted to be denied that such a force as the volunteers was necessary in the present exigency of the country, and such a force could not, he believed, be formed so completely as to remove every objection. The principle of the volunteer establishment proceeded on the old system which originated during the last Administration. The present bill was only an attempt to improve it. Formerly he had known corps of five hundred men and upwards without either regular adjutants or serjeants. The present bill remedied these defects, and had a tendency to introduce such discipline among the volunteers, as to render them very little inferior to any regular corps. Any economy in this respect the noble Duke regarded as very pitiful indeed. He ridiculed the idea of providing great coats, instead of the allowance being paid in money: most of the volunteers had great coats of their own. At any rate, if the two guineas were meant as an inducement, which the bill seemed to purport, they ought to be given in money to the individual. The prominent character of a good soldier, the noble Duke insisted, was not courage only, but a determination to fight against the enemy. His Grace delivered an eulogium on the Edinburgh volunteers, for whom he would venture to answer, and who in every respect he could pledge himself were equal to any description of force under the Crown, either in respect to the skill of the officers or the discipline of men.—The noble Duke declared himself hostile to exemptions. Honour, glory, and safety ought to be the only reward of the volunteers. He approved of the principle of the bill, but thought the different clauses might admit of many alterations.

The *Earl of Wiltshire* defended the principle of the bill.

bill. His Lordship declared that it was far from his intention to hold out desponding language under the present circumstances; but, to speak fairly, the bravery and vast force of the enemy must be admitted; it must also be admitted that the insular situation of the country made it incumbent on the Government, to provide such means as would be equal to the task of defending the country at every point at which it might possibly be attacked. The great extent of our coast, in proportion to the population of the country, was such as made it absolutely necessary, that when we saw that coast threatened, some extraordinary measures should be resorted to, in order to apportion our means in some degree to that which was opposed to us. The commerce, the finances, and the industry of the country were unable to bear the pressure of the expense of other inconveniencies which might arise from the circumstance of the Government having recourse to the ordinary means of raising a military body, if they raised it to that extent which the circumstances of the case required. It was therefore evident that something like the present measure must be resorted to; in adopting it, his Majesty's Ministers had wisely followed the steps of the late Administration, of which he was happy to say he formed a part. He was fully convinced of the measure being not only most materially requisite for the defence of the country, but also that it did not in any degree interfere with the levy of other forces, and was as complete within itself as the nature of our situation at present seemed to admit of; until some noble Lord therefore suggested a better plan, the whole of the system should have his most cordial support.

Lord Auckland closed the debate.—He said he was desirous to have it understood that he did not vote for the second reading of the bill, on the ground of its being now too late to take any retrograde measure with respect to the volunteer system. Many of their Lordships had that night considered it as a system to be regretted perhaps in its origin, but now unavoidable to be maintained. He had considered it with an unprejudiced mind; he could not regret it; he was not aware that it would have been prudent or even practicable to have adopted any other system of defence commensurate to the dangers with which we had been threatened. He had not been blind to the objections to which the measure was liable. For a certain degree it was constitutionally dangerous; and it also had a tendency to change the temper and disposition of the people, and to become injurious to our commercial industry

and pre-eminency. But he thought it the least evil amidst the choice of evils. The calamitous destinies of the present times, and the sudden rearing of a power which has desolated a large part of Europe, and overawes the remainder, required a force for our preservation beyond what the regular recruiting could give. We were obliged to have a great augmentation either by compulsory means, which would have been difficult and precarious, or by volunteers. The latter had offered themselves, even beyond what was wanted, and with a spirit and generosity to which it was impossible for language to do justice. He lamented the necessity of war; but surely our present situation was preferable to that in which we found ourselves during the short period of nominal peace. Fortunately for us the wickedest of mankind was the most intemperate of mankind; and his imprudence had counteracted his malignity. He could not govern his domineering vanity; he had exhibited every vice but that of hypocrisy. Instead of lulling us into a false security by protestations and flattery, he had intolently apprized us of his intention to erase us from the nations of the world, and to crush us: happily then he had forced us into war before his plans were ready for the explosion; and now without levity or presumption we may boldly bid defiance to him. There could not be a doubt in any cool and unprejudiced mind, that with the combined force of our navy, army, militia, and volunteers, amounting together to about 700,000 men, we are more an object of dread and danger to France than France can be to us; and the only consideration which now gave any anxiety to his mind, was that of our expence. He knew that our resources were great; still, however, the duration of the struggle was uncertain; and it would be wise to reflect that due economy is an essential branch of security. It had been painful to him to hear it said in the debate, that the volunteers may quit the defence of the empire in the eve of danger. He had not the smallest doubt on his mind that if the hour of danger should arrive, the alacrity and zeal of the volunteers would be redoubled; that such of them as might have retired at present, would then resort to their respective corps; and in the result, he had a well founded confidence that we should close this contest in a manner glorious to ourselves, exemplary to our posterity, and most essential to the permanent interests and safety of the British empire.

The bill was then read a second time.

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Lord Hawkebury said, as it seemed to be thought that the Committee could not be conveniently gone through before the recess, he should move that the bill should be committed on Thursday se'nnight, which would be the first day of meeting after the recess which he intended to move for.

Lord Harrowby expressed a wish that the recess should be shorter, in order to give their Lordships an opportunity of going through a bill of this importance with the utmost speed.

Lord Hawkebury opposed the idea of curtailing the intended recess, as it would be unusually short.

The bill was then ordered to be committed on Thursday se'nnight.

Adjourned at half past eleven till the next day.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TUESDAY, MARCH 27.

Petitions were presented from Harwich, Gravesend, and Faversham, against the Marine Society fishery bill, and praying to be heard by counsel at the bar, in opposition to the same. Ordered to lie on the table,

MARINE SOCIETY FISHERY BILL.

On the question being put upon the second reading of the Marine Society fishery bill,

Colonel Calcraft rose, and argued forcibly against the farther progress of the measure, which he conceived to have a tendency very materially to interfere with the interests of a meritorious class of men, by whom our fishery was now conducted, and from whom the House had just received several petitions. This interference he thought the more deserving of opposition, because no case whatever had been made out by the advocates of this bill to shew that any necessity existed to call for it, or that any advantages were likely to result from its adoption. No public benefit was held out to induce the House to grant the immunities which this bill proposed, to any company of speculators. It was not pretended, much less shewn, that this company could supply the London market with fish at a cheaper rate than it now was supplied; and had such a pretence been even advanced, he trusted that it could obtain but little credit with the House, when he stated, that the great bulk of the fish brought to Billingsgate, was disposed of by the fishermen at about 2d. per lb. To what had been and might be said, respecting the tendency and

and good effects of corporations in checking monopoly and reducing the price of provisions, it was only necessary to reply by a reference to the institution of the London Flour Company, from which so much was promised, and by which the public had not heard that any good had been done. He contended, that it was not at all probable the company which this bill proposed to incorporate, could furnish fish for the London market on terms as moderate, or that their supply could be so regular, as that from the old established fishermen, who were obliged, from their circumstances, to look out for fish for their subsistence, and to exert their utmost skill; while the proposed company, who knew nothing of the business of fishing, would be of course obliged to employ agents to conduct their affairs, who were not likely to be as active as the former, because they would not have the same motives to stimulate their industry. Under these considerations, the hon. Member thought the House should be cautious of entertaining a measure which would go to shake the old establishment of our fisheries, to interrupt that system from which the country had derived so much benefit, and to injure those poor fishermen who had always evinced such readiness to contribute to the public service. In proof of this readiness, the hon. Member mentioned, that there were at present not less than 200 fishermen enrolled for the national defence at Harwich. The reasons he had stated, he was happy in being able to say, were corroborated by the opinion of the respectable colleague (Mr. Honeywood) of the honourable Baronet (Sir W. Geary) who made the motion before the House. This opinion, he was authorized to mention, was decidedly hostile to the measure under discussion, and as it came from a mind not less competent to decide upon the subject, than pure in the motives which uniformly guided its decisions, he had no doubt that it would have its due weight with the House. The hon. Member, after observing upon the rejection of a bill precisely similar to the present, in the course of the last sessions, upon grounds none of which had yet ceased to exist, concluded with moving, "That the bill should be read a second time on this day six months."

Mr. Henry Addington begged to set the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down right with respect to the bill which was before the House last session, as that bill was not rejected, but withdrawn by the hon. Baronet who introduced it, merely in consequence of its being understood that more time was necessary in order to give it a full consideration; and he complimented

plimented the candour with which the hon. Baronet had acted upon that occasion. The time which had since elapsed, and the opportunity of reflection which it afforded, he should have supposed would have convinced the persons interested that it would not be expedient to introduce such a bill again, a bill which, if adopted, would go to establish what he could have no hesitation in calling a dangerous monopoly—such a one, indeed, as there was no precedent for in the annals of Parliament. It would also be, in his judgment, found a very hasty, inconsiderate speculation for the subscribers themselves, while it would operate not merely to injure, but absolutely to destroy the old established fishermen. Such was the apprehension of the consequences of this bill, that he understood some of his constituents had actually sold some of the shipping employed in the fish trade. They felt that it would be wiser in them to abandon the business although they had at present not less than 3000 apprentices rearing for the sea, than attempt competition with a wealthy corporation, who could give such high bounties as would render it impossible for them to keep their men on board.

Mr. Hurst had a host of objections to the bill before the House, but there were two which struck him forcibly: the first was, that although no grounds of public advantage were laid for the measure, it would tend to injure materially all the fishermen on the River and on the coast adjacent thereto; and the second, that he believed no fund as yet existed for the purpose of this company. If so, then he would ask, why should the House sanction a visionary project? He strongly condemned that clause in the bill, which went to protect seamen employed by this corporation from the impress service. To the principle of impressing men he was by no means a friend, but while it existed as a general law, he could not agree to the propriety of a particular exception in favour of this company, which would enable them to take from the public service any number of seamen they might think proper.

Sir W. Dolben thought there was enough on the face of the bill to entitle it to consideration in a Committee, where any alterations might be made in the provisions of it, as the case might appear to require upon further investigation. He also thought enough was stated in the preamble of the bill to entitle it to further consideration; and as to the objections which had been stated against the bill, he did not at present undertake to decide whether they were well or ill founded in point

point of fact, but this he would say, they rested hitherto on assertion only; and that was of itself a reason why, in his opinion, the bill ought to go into a Committee, where, and where alone, the whole matter might be fully investigated. As to what had been said on the subject of combinations, it was to be observed, that this was not proposed as a measure to favour a combination, but a measure to create a corporation in the trade of fishing, and experience had taught him there was a great difference between a combination and a corporation; a combination had often raised provisions under pretence of lowering them, but a corporation had never done any such thing. Upon the whole of this matter, he thought the least thing the House could do in point of prudence, would be to allow the bill to go into a Committee, for without that the House could hardly see the true nature of the case.

Sir W. Geary supported the bill, and assigned the reason why it was not proceeded in last session. It was not correctly stated when it was said that it was disposed of by the sense of the Committee to whom it was referred; the truth was, that he withdrew it, not on account of its appearing to be an improper measure, but on account of the lateness of the season. It had been alleged, as a reason for not entertaining this bill, that some fish was now sold at so low a rate as two-pence per pound; but of this there was no proof, and he was at liberty to say, what he conscientiously felt, that he doubted the fact. The bill had been represented as a measure tending only to support some individuals, instead of being of service to the public; or, in other words, as a measure tending to create a monopoly; but this he denied, as the capital was to be limited to 50,000*l.* and if he thought it likely to have that effect, he would be one of the last men in the House to support it. He thought, on the contrary, that it was a measure founded on a large and liberal policy, and that the opposition to it arose from local prejudices and temporary interests; and under such impressions, he was bound by the sense he entertained of his duty, as a representative of the people of this country in general, considering their interest on an extensive scale, to vote for the bill now before the House.

Mr. P. Moore referred to an act of the year 1753, by which a corporation, of a nature similar to that proposed by the bill, was created; and stated, that although 500,000*l.* were subscribed to that corporation, the scheme so completely failed

failed that only 17l. were, after a few years, returned to each subscriber for every 100l. originally advanced. From this and other like instances, some of which he mentioned, he was adverse to the bill before the House, as he was, indeed, to the principle of thus giving to trading companies the sanction of Parliament. He never knew that any good arose from it, and, from his own experience, he could readily believe, that it was often made use of for improper purposes. If a company of merchants meant to enter into any speculation they might do so, and accomplish all the objects of this bill without any parliamentary sanction. Why then apply for it? He looked at the proposition with jealousy, as he ever should at any thing of the kind, particularly when he considered that the authority of Parliament often induced men to subscribe to plans with which they would otherwise have had no connection, and that the property of many individuals was thus the victim of visionary projects. From those considerations, the honourable Gentleman earnestly exhorted the House to pause before they gave their concurrence to such a measure as that now under discussion.

Mr. Prinsep—That I may detain the House as short a time as possible, I shall reserve the defence of the rights and privileges of my own constituents, whose petitions against this bill are on the table, to the ability of their counsel, and to my feeble efforts at some future stage, in case (but of which I have no expectation whatever) it should be allowed any further progress, and confine myself to a brief examination, how far the professed objects of this bill are compatible with the means intended to be applied in their execution. The bill assumes the title of “the *Marine Society Fishing Company*, for increasing the supply of fish, for advancing “the objects of the institution of the *Marine Society*.” Now, Sir, without in the least meaning to impeach the conduct of the highly honourable promoters of this bill, of whose motives I entertain no suspicion whatever, I cannot but regret extremely, that they should have been persuaded to borrow the name of a society the most justly popular of all the benevolent institutions of this most generous country, to bolster up a wild, visionary project; and to involve the funds and character of a charitable and national undertaking, in the precarious issue of a mercenary speculation. The present *Marine Society* was instituted in 1756, for the purpose of clothing and fitting out poor and distressed boys and others for sea, and apprenticing them in his Majesty’s navy. Since its first establishment, it has provided for above 56,000

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men and boys, and expended upwards of two hundred thousand pounds, in promoting the marine service of the nation. It has subsisted nearly half a century with the unanimous suffrage and applause of mankind. What does the bill now before us invite the House to sanction? a perversion (whether in the whole, or in part only, it matters not as to the principle) of the donations and legacies of charitable persons, to purposes widely different from the intention of the donors, and without their consent or that of their heirs or representatives. Some of these bequests, I beg leave to state, amount to 14, 15, and 17,000*l.* each. The House will never sanction so gross a violation of a public trust. But the new society are to be under obligation to receive these boys as apprentices? How will this further the purposes of the old society? The boys will thus be kept out of his Majesty's service for a period of seven years; whereas at present they go directly to sea, and in most cases into the royal navy. I would appeal to any Lord of the Admiralty who heard me, how far that purpose of the Marine Society is promoted by such a delay. Now, as to the treatment of the boys themselves, an anxious object of the former plan, these poor deserted creatures, taken from the streets and fed, clothed, and apprenticed to commissioned or non-commissioned officers of the navy, have honourable and responsible patrons, and are early subject to the discipline of the service. To whose care, I would ask, are they now to be committed? Are they to be bound to the servants of the new society, or to the corporate body? If to the latter, these deserted objects of the present humane society, would be ill taken care of, by working, sometimes under one master, sometimes under another. It bound to the fishermen themselves, instead of that constant daring perseverance, which constitutes the character of the individuals who now supply our markets (as it has been already well observed) with this article of provisions cheaper than any other wholesome food whatever, the boys will acquire the indolent, listless habits of men working for a public body and receiving monthly wages. But, the Marine Society are to partake of the *profits* of this speculation. A very few words, on this subject, with permission of the House, and I have done. The hon. Baronet, who spoke last, states as an advantage to the plan, the small capital of 50,000*l.* Now this seems to me hardly a consistent argument: few of the mercantile establishments of this city trade under a smaller capital, many much larger, and they require no charter. If the
scheme

scheme be a good one, it ought to be more extensive, or it may be carried on without the sanction of Parliament. But I am not of that opinion. This metropolis, it was in proof or ready to be proved in the Committee last year, are supplied with immense quantities of fish at 2d the pound. This supply is produced by the activity of individuals, clubbing together their labour and small capitals, in the purchase or hire, and in the use of nets and implements of their trade; these men earn now but a scanty subsistence. By whom are the intended corporation to supply us *cheaper*? by hiring these very men, who certainly will expect to be paid better than if following their occupations after their own way: and universal experience warrants me to say, they certainly will work less: paid by the week or month, such people will fish as little as they can. Now for the other incidental charges: Will a public body supply itself with boats, nets, and implements cheaper or dearer, and make them last a longer or a shorter time than the fishermen themselves? I anticipate the answer. The good sense of the House sees the utter impracticability of the scheme, which I hesitate not to denominate a visionary or ruinous speculation, neither promising to increase the supply of fish, nor promoting the objects of the Marine Society. I therefore heartily concur in the amendment proposed.

After a few words from Mr. Blackburne in favour of the bill, the House divided on Colonel Calcraft's motion.

For it 38—Against it 35.—Majority 3.

The bill of course was lost.

Mr. Sheridan gave notice, that he would the next day make a motion which would bring under consideration the decision which had lately been made respecting the priority of a certain petition relative to the late election for Liskeard, to the question as to the right of the electors which had been fixed some time since for discussion on the 10th of next month.

A person from the office of the Chief Secretary of State in Ireland, presented an account of the number of vessels, and their tonnage, employed in the Irish trade for the last year, together with other accounts, which were ordered to be printed.

Mr. Alexander brought up the report of the Irish militia families provision bill.

Mr. Corry, perceiving that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Foster) with whom he had differed upon the subject, was not then in his place, moved to postpone till the next

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day, the further consideration of the report, as he had some amendments to propose, which he would rather bring forward in the presence of the right hon. Gentleman alluded to.

The motion was agreed to.

On the motion of Mr. Corry, an account was ordered of the number of ballotted men in the several regiments of the Irish militia on the 1st of November, 1803, distinguishing the number of men in each regiment, and the time for which each man was ballotted.

Ordered, on the motion of Mr. Fellowes, that there be laid before the House an account of the quantity of wheat and flour, rye, barley, and malt, oats and oatmeal, peas and beans, which have been imported to, or exported from, Great Britain; with the bounties, drawbacks, and duties paid on the importation or exportation of the same, from the 5th of January 1803, to the 5th of January, 1804, distinguishing England and Scotland. An account was also ordered for the years 1800, 1801, 1802, and 1803, of bounties paid on grain and flour.

On the motion for reading a third time the bankers' indemnity bill,

Sir William Elford suggested the propriety of introducing into this bill some provision to relieve the country bankers from the penalties to which they were liable, for not paying the proportion fixed by the income act upon all the various small sums placed in their hands. This was a regulation with which it was obviously impossible for them to conform; and if they should attempt it, the consequence would be, that the appeals would be more numerous than all the commissioners, were they to devote the whole of their lives, could contrive to investigate.

Mr. Vanstuart thought the bill, as it stood, sufficient to meet the case alluded to by the hon. Baronet. He was not indeed aware of any case for which this bill did not provide. If however, upon revising the property act, any amendment should appear necessary upon the point referred to by the hon. Baronet, or upon any other, it would of course be attended to.

The bill was then read a third time and passed.

Adjourned.

HOUSE

HOUSE OF LORDS.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 28.

Counsel were heard in continuation on the cross appeal, *Abercromby v. Fleming*. After which, their Lordships adjourned the further consideration of the case till Friday se'nnight.

The St. Pancras workhouse bill, and an inclosure bill, were brought up from the Commons, and severally read a first time.

IRISH MILITIA.

Lord Hawkebury having moved the order of the day, for taking his Majesty's message into consideration, the same, together with his Majesty's message, were read. The noble Secretary then observed, that with respect to the address, he should have the honour to propose to his Majesty, on the occasion of his message, he hoped it would, when the importance and favourable nature of the subject were considered, meet the unanimous concurrence of their Lordships; the more so, as in the address there would be nothing tending to pledge the House to the adoption of any specific measure, but merely general expressions of their willingness to concur in enabling his Majesty to take advantage of the offers made by several regiments of the Irish militia. Here his Lordship said, he could not avoid offering his tribute of applause, to the ardent zeal and patriotism, which dictated these offers of extended service. The voluntary coming forward of these troops in so laudable and patriotic a manner, was following up the auspicious measure of the Union, in a most important and striking instance; and tending to identify the interests, the happiness, and the prosperity of both parts of the united kingdom. It was then unnecessary to take up their Lordships' time with any detailed observations on the subject, as it would afterwards come under their consideration in a regular shape, farther than to observe, that one important object to be attained by it, was the increasing the disposable force of this country. His Lordship concluded by proposing an address, corresponding, as usual, with the prominent features of the message.

After the address had been read from the woolsack,

The *Duke of Montrose* expressed his readiness to concur with the noble Secretary of State in his eulogium upon the zeal and patriotism of the troops who had come forward in the way adverted to in his Majesty's message. He was happy in such

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an accession of force in the present circumstances of the country, and should concur in the proposed address. At the same time he would beg leave to offer a few observations upon points connected with the subject, which was of peculiar importance. And first he would observe upon the injurious tendency of armed bodies of men being suffered to deliberate, and in that point of view he had to regret that the offer proceeded from the troops; he had rather such extension of service were in consequence of a prescribed duty on the part of Government and the Legislature; that which was performed by persons so circumstanced, as a duty, would be well executed; but when they considered it as their doing something more than their duty the chance of its being well performed was the less. (*Hear! Hear!*) He thought it would be preferable in his Majesty's Government, on such an occasion as the present, to come forward in a manly way, and at once propose legislative measures to render reciprocal the militia services of both countries: this would be furthering the happy effects of the union, on the interests, the happiness, and the security of all parts of the united kingdom. Regulations of this kind were become the more necessary as the relative situation of those countries, more especially with regard to continental considerations, and the aggrandizement of France, was of late considerably changed. It would be necessary that this country should become a much more military nation than it had been for many years past, and in this necessary change, he thought that the nobility and gentry of the united kingdom should take the lead; they should inure themselves to military habits. He was aware that the extension of the services of the British militia to Ireland, would be rather unpalatable to many of its officers; to some, who on account of age, or feelings of disinclination, may not wish to serve out of England; and that the unavoidable consequences of such would be several resignations. This, in some points of view was to be regretted; but when put in competition with the advantages which would arise in consequence of the extension of service, the ill effect would comparatively be but little; added to this, it would afford an opportunity to the introduction of young officers, even to the higher ranks of the militia service, which he thought would be preferable to having these corps officered by old men. The experience of history demonstrated that victories in general were achieved by young commanders; for instance, the cases of the wars carried on by the old king of Prussia, and his successor, the Great Frederick,

Frederick, who was very young when he commenced his military career; and the repeated victories which the French gained over the Austrian forces in the late war, were principally owing to the exertions of their young officers. Young commanders might commit errors, but they generally retrieved them by achieving victory: whereas, old men generally let the occasion go by, while their endeavours were directed to avoid the commission of mistakes. Recurring to the subject immediately before the House, his Grace repeated his opinion, that it would be preferable to come forward on such an occasion as the present, manfully, with an act for rendering the services of the militias of both countries reciprocal.

The *Marquis of Sligo* said, from the general approbation which the measure resulting from the message from the Crown had received from all sides of the House, he should not have judged it necessary to trouble their Lordships with one word on its subject, if it had not been for something which had fallen from a noble Duke, by which he seemed to consider, that if the services of the Irish militia were necessary in this country, it would be more advisable and more manly to obtain them by an act of the Parliament of the united kingdom, than by the acceptance of their proffered services. His Lordship said, the Irish militia had been enlisted explicitly for serving in Ireland *only*, and, therefore, however wise the principle suggested by the noble Duke, it could not be acted upon at the present. To comply with that advice, the first step must be to discharge every one of those patriots, who had now voluntarily tendered their services, and enlist them again on the terms of extended service. Lord Sligo said, that every measure tending to cement the union of Great Britain with Ireland, ever had had, and ever should have his warmest concurrence. Every thing that assimilated them to each other, every thing that made them one, every thing that created in them one interest and one feeling, added to the happiness, the strength and security of the empire; and if the period should happily arrive, when a population of near twenty millions should be brought to act under one mind and one feeling, they had little to fear from their enemies, though the world were united against them.

The *Earl of Limrick* observed, that he should have contented himself with a silent vote on the present occasion, were it not for one point in the speech of the noble Duke. The conduct of the Irish militia was on this occasion above all panegyric; he would leave it to other noble Lords to attempt it. What had

had been stated by the noble Marquis, respecting the Irish militia being enlisted for the limited service of their own country, was true; and with respect to the noble Duke's idea of coming manfully forward, with a legislative provision on the subject, it might be manly and courageous, but certainly, under the circumstances of the case, it would be dangerous. He was adverse to the experiment of legislating for men so circumstanced as were the troops in question, with arms in their hands. At the same time no man could more earnestly wish for a reciprocity of the militia service than himself, and he had always held out the idea as tending to consolidate the military force of the united kingdom, and render it the more secure: but under the circumstances of the case, this could not be effected, as far as the Irish militia was concerned, by legislative provisions in the first instance.

Lord Grenville was solicitous to contribute his share of applause to the ardent zeal and patriotism of those troops who had so laudably come forward, and he agreed with the noble Marquis in what he had stated as the probable result of the union between the two countries. It was the object of that great measure to identify the interests of Great Britain and Ireland, and to promote the happiness and security of both; to bring them not only under one Legislature, and system of laws, but that the spirit of Government in both countries should be precisely the same. As far as these principles were acted upon, so far were the objects of the union attained. He was aware of the terms upon which the Irish militia were raised—not by means of ballot, as in this country, but by means of bounty, on enlisting the men. It would certainly have been preferable that the desired arrangement had been the result of legislative provisions, and not, as in the present instance, proceeding from the voluntary offers of the corps themselves. At the time the bill by which the Irish militia were raised was under discussion, it was earnestly recommended to Ministers, that the militia so raised by bounty, should be enlisted for the service of the united kingdom. That advice was then rejected, and in consequence, they were placed in the present predicament. His Lordship said, it was by no means his intention to oppose the motion.

Lord Hobart highly commended the spirited and patriotic offer of the Irish militia; such, he was sensible, would always be the conduct of the people of that country, when not misled by the intrigues of their enemies. The question was not now whether it would have been better to raise fencible or militia

militia regiments in Ireland. As it had been determined to raise a militia, let that force only be raised on the usual condition of serving in the country. Since an engagement to that effect had been entered into, it was above all things necessary that the public faith should not be violated. With regard to the advice which the noble Lord said had been given to his Majesty's Ministers, he declared that for his part he had no recollection of having ever heard of it before.

Lord Darnley was of opinion, that the principle laid down by the noble Lord, that a militia force must be raised on the usual principle of not serving out of the country, was applicable to the state of Ireland before the union, but not to its state now. He thought that the militia of both England and Ireland should be liable to serve in either country. He did not understand how the offer of the Irish militia could be said to augment the disposable force of this country.

Lord Grenville remarked that the message did not express what part of the Irish militia had offered to serve in this country. He hoped that the offers were not made by individuals, but by complete regiments.

Lord Hawkebury answered, that, as far as his recollection served him, the offers came from regiments.

The *Marquis of Sligo* said, that the message from the Throne did not do entire justice to the zeal and patriotism of the Irish militia; that though it implied that offers of service had been sent from a part, he believed the entire of the militia had offered to volunteer to this country, and was persuaded they would do so if they had conceived their services would have been accepted; that many or most part of them had made the same tender during the last war.

The address was then voted *nem. dis.* and ordered to be presented to his Majesty in the usual manner.

The bill for regulating the admission into priests' and deacons' orders was read a second time, and committed for Friday se'nnight, Lord Ellenborough observing, that in the Committee he should move, that the bill should not go to affect the rights of the Archbishop of Canterbury or the Primate of Ireland.

Adjourned to Thursday se'nnight.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 28.

A new writ was ordered for Knareborough, in the room of James Hare, Esq. deceased.

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A message

A message from the Lords informed the House that their Lordships had agreed to the expiring laws bill, and the sugar warehousing bill.

Mr. Steele presented an account of the army extraordinaries, from the 25th of December 1802, to the 24th of December 1803, which was ordered to be laid upon the table, and to be printed.

Mr. Alcock, from the Treasury, presented an account of the sums in the distribution paper remaining in the Exchequer, and to be raised, which was ordered to lie on the table.

The St. Pancras poor bill was read a third time and passed.

Mr. Bullock presented a petition from the land owners, maltsters, &c. of Essex, praying relief with respect to the duties on malt. Ordered to lie on the table.

Lord Marham reported from the Middlesex election Committee, that if leave was given them to adjourn over the Easter holidays, after having sat eight weeks, it would cause no additional expence to the parties, but might be attended with advantage to them. After bringing up the report he moved, "That the Committee should have leave to adjourn to Monday the 9th of April."—Leave given.

IRISH MILITIA FAMILIES' BILL.

Mr. Corry moved the order of the day for the further consideration of the report of the Committee on the Irish militia family provision bill. This measure had been postponed on account of the absence of a right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Foster), whom he was happy then to see in his place.

After several other clauses, that clause was read which contained the amendment made on a former night by Mr. Foster, relating to the arrears of militiamen, on which

Mr. Foster begged leave to ask the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Corry), if it was his intention to oppose this clause in the progress of the bill?

Mr. Corry having admitted that such was his intention,

Mr. Foster stated, that his object in proposing the amendment was, to put the militiamen of Ireland exactly on the same footing as they had been previous to the alteration that had been made in that system, in consequence of the union. He wished that they should at least be placed on the same footing as they had been led to expect when enlisted. The alteration that had taken place in the militia system, had

passed

passed the Legislature in the month of August, but those men who had enlisted in the month of November, had no opportunity of knowing this regulation, and had therefore enlisted on terms very different from those in which they were afterwards placed. He thought Parliament was bound to keep faith with those men, and to approach as nearly as possible to the terms on which they supposed themselves to enlist. He had considerable objections besides from another view of the subject, that not more arrears should be received at a time than a fortnight. Many families of the description now in question, were at a considerable distance from the places where such arrears were to be paid; and it would be very hard, he conceived, to compel such people to travel thirty or forty miles every week or every fortnight, when once in six weeks or once a quarter might serve the purpose equally well. While they were known to have this fund at command, they could very easily procure credit for what necessities they might want. Should any regulation of the kind be thought advisable, it would be much better, the right hon. Gentleman thought, to compel officers to pay the arrears every fortnight, if demanded. Against this there certainly could be less objection, but to order people to receive such sums every fortnight, whatever might be their distance or their necessity, was a solecism in common sense which he could not admit to pass the House without his sincere opposition.

Mr. Curry thought the great object of the right hon. Gentleman was acceded to, so far as the bill had gone, but with regard to the allowances made to the families of militiamen, there ought to be some difference certainly in the mode of payment, as those allowances were now to be made from the Exchequer, instead of being paid by people connected with the respective county or parish as formerly. Such Gentlemen, therefore, as should be appointed by the Exchequer, were not to be supposed to have in their power to attend so closely to the minutiae of this business as Gentlemen of another description; thus it became necessary that a new regulation should be adopted, more adapted to the new mode of payment, and the new channels from which those payments were derived. His principal reason, however, he contended, for this mode of discharging the arrears and other allowances, was, in order to preserve as complete a uniformity as possible in the militia system, which the amendment of the right hon. Gentleman went to destroy.

On the question being put Mr. Foster's amendment was negatived without a division.

The report was then agreed to, and the bill ordered to be read a third time the next day.

Mr. Hiley Addington brought up the report of the Committee, respecting the disputes between cotton manufacturers and their workmen, which was ordered to be taken into consideration on Monday, the 9th of April, and to be printed.

Mr. Curwen moved for an account of the amount of the port duties in the Isle of Man, upon exports and imports, from the 1st of January 1798, to the 1st of January 1804, together with all sums paid thereout on account of salaries, &c. and the supplies remaining. Ordered.

Lord A. Hamilton, after observing upon the necessity and propriety which he thought existed for the Committee on the difference in the duties between English and Scotch barley, deriving every information upon the subject from Gentlemen from Scotland, moved to add to the Committee the names of Sir John Sinclair, Mr. Kinnaird, and Sir W. Erskine.

Sir R. Buxton would not resist the motion, but wished that an equal number of English Gentlemen might also be added.

After a few words from Mr. Kinnaird, the names of the above Gentlemen were added to the Committee.

Sir R. Buxton was proceeding to propose four English Members to be added to the Committee, but afterwards withdrew his motion, and gave notice of it for the next day.

LISKEARD ELECTION.

Mr. Sheridan presented a petition from Thomas Sheridan, Esq. complaining of an undue election for the borough of Liskeard. After stating that he wished to propose that the petition should be taken into consideration on the first open day after that fixed for the consideration of the petition of right, he observed, that he thought it utterly impossible that the House could suffer the other petition from Mr. Huskisson to be taken into consideration previous to the discussion of the petition of right, as it was impossible to say that the Committee on either petition might not go into the merits, which would interfere with the consideration of the right.

The *Speaker* observed that the only question which could then

then be put, was respecting the day for taking the petition just presented into consideration.

Mr. Sheridan then moved that it should be taken into consideration on Monday the 23d of April. Ordered.

Mr. Sheridan afterwards moved the reading of the order of the day, for taking into consideration, on the 9th of April, the petition of Mr. Huskisson.

Mr. Pitt urged, that there had been no regular notice given to move the postponement of the consideration of this petition, and therefore, at any rate, such a motion ought to be delayed. With a view to the consistency of their proceedings, they ought to adhere to what they had already done unless some very strong reasons were shewn to the contrary. It was also consistent with the practice of the House, that a double return should have the priority in consideration, whilst in this the question respecting that return could not interfere with the question of right. It was wholly uncertain when that question of right would be determined, and, in the mean time, according to the proposition of the hon. Gentleman, the House was to be kept without any Member being there to represent the borough of Liskeard.

Mr. Sheridan said, he had given notice on the preceding day that he intended to move to defer the consideration of Mr. Huskisson's petition until after the discussion of the petition of right. As to the argument, that thereby the House might be kept without any representative for Liskeard, he begged leave to observe, that if the candidate chose to give notice that he would not defend the double return, Mr. Huskisson might be kept out of his seat for sixty days.

Mr. Pitt observed, that if such a notice as that mentioned by the hon. Gentleman was given, the House would know how to proceed, but the threat of giving such a notice was no argument for deferring the consideration of the petition.

Mr. Burroughs observed, that the former order was made with the consent of all parties, and it ought not to be rescinded without due notice.

The Secretary at War observed, that no question affecting the right was likely to arise out of the consideration of Mr. Huskisson's petition.

The question was then put for reading the order of the day, and negatived.

CAPTURES

CAPTURES AT TOULON.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer moved the order of the day for the House to resolve itself into a Committee of Supply, and that the papers respecting Lord Hood's claims relative to the captures at Toulon should be referred to the said Committee; which was ordered.

The House having resolved itself into a Committee,

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, he had to call the attention of the Committee to a subject, which he could not help thinking required all that indulgence and liberality which they were uniformly accustomed to shew to the exertions of the British navy, a subject which connected itself with one of the most splendid exertions of our navy during the last war, and related to officers and seamen as meritorious as any in the British service. It was impossible that any one could doubt the merit of the service performed by Lord Hood at Toulon. The present subject affected the interests of Lord Hood, Lord Keith, Lord Radstock, and of all the officers and seamen under the command of Lord Hood upon that occasion, who were now living, and the families of those who were deceased; all were involved in the consideration of the subject, which he felt it incumbent upon him to submit to the Committee. It was not his intention to go into any particular detail with respect to the surrender of Toulon; it would be recollected that the inhabitants of the southern part of France, weary of the worst of tyranny that ever degraded the human race, expressed a wish to be placed under the authority of the legitimate heir of their murdered sovereign. In consequence of this, Lord Hood became possessed of the town and harbour of Toulon, and of several French ships, which, by a convention, went to be held, in part, for Louis XVII. to whom they were to be restored. During the continuance of the war it was obvious that the nature of the terms agreed upon, precluded Lord Hood from claiming any remuneration for himself and the officers and seamen under his command. After the ratification of the definitive treaty of peace, Lord Hood presented a memorial to his Majesty, claiming a reward for the officers and seamen, on account of the French ships destroyed and taken possession of at Toulon, together with their ordnance and stores. His Majesty was pleased to refer the memorial to the Privy Council, a Committee of whom took it into consideration. It was the opinion of that Committee, that it was

was not expedient to grant any remuneration for the ten sail of the line and other vessels which were destroyed, because it was not the practice to grant remuneration for ships destroyed at sea, it was only where they were captured that the captors became entitled to prize-money, head-money, &c. The Committee of Privy Council however recommended that a remuneration should be given for those ships which were brought away from Toulon, and afterwards employed in his Majesty's service. It was then referred to the Lords of the Admiralty and to the Master General of the Ordnance, to report the value of those ships, and of the ordnance and stores taken in them. The Lords of the Admiralty reported the value of the ships at 236,742l. and the value of the ordnance and stores at 28,594l. 14s. 10½d. On these reports being received, the Committee of Council recommended the granting of a remuneration to Lord Hood, which was approved of by his Majesty in council, and it was upon this recommendation approved of by his Majesty, that he submitted the proposition for remuneration to the Committee. In considering this subject, it should be remembered, that in other instances the officers and seamen of his Majesty's navy had been favoured in a similar manner to that now proposed. At the Helder several Dutch ships were taken possession of by Admiral Mitchell, in the name of the Stadtholder; and without detracting from the merit of that service, would any man say that the service performed by Lord Hood at Toulon, did not establish at least an equal claim to the gratitude of the country? The ships taken at the Helder were libelled in the court of Admiralty, but never condemned: the ships taken by Lord Hood at Toulon had not been libelled; but would any man say, that if they had, they might not have been condemned? The distinction, however, was immaterial. The value was given for the ships taken at the Helder. Two other instances were, the ships destroyed by Lord Nelson at Aboukir, and those destroyed and taken at Copenhagen, in both which compensation was given. He only asked that the House would not, in this instance, take advantage of the want of condemnation, and that they would give the officers and seamen employed at Toulon the value of those ships which they had taken, and which had been employed in his Majesty's service. It might be asked, if the claim he now made was so just, how had it happened that it was not brought forward sooner. From the nature of the terms agreed upon with respect to the ships taken possession of, it was evident it could not be brought forward

forward during the war. Afterwards, some time was taken up in the consideration of the subject. The reports of the Board of Admiralty and Ordnance were made on the 31st of March and the 1st of April last year. There was no necessity to recal to the recollection of Gentlemen how much Government and Parliament had been employed from the 1st of April to the end of the last session. On the 31st of August the Privy Council finally recommended the remuneration, and it was approved of by his Majesty. He did not think it proper to bring forward a subject of such importance in the present session previous to the Christmas recess, when the attendance was thin, and afterwards it had been delayed from obvious reasons. He wished, however, that whatever blame might be attached to the delay, it might be wholly imputed to him, and that it might not be suffered to injure the cause of Lord Hood, or the officers and seamen who were under his command, and who, he trusted, would experience that attention and indulgence which the House were always disposed to shew to British officers and British seamen. He concluded by moving, that a sum not exceeding 265,336*l.* be granted to his Majesty, to be distributed to the officers and seamen under the command of Lord Hood at the capture of Toulon, being the estimated value of the ships and vessels taken possession of upon that occasion, and the ordnance and stores on board them.

Captain Pierrepont said that he had arrived at Toulon soon after the event referred to in the motion, and he rose with pleasure to bear testimony to the high character which Lord Hood and Hotham had obtained upon that occasion. If these gallant officers, and others concerned with them, had lost their lives in that undertaking, he was sure that the House would have had no hesitation in voting that monuments should be erected to their memory. Let then (observed the hon. Member) the motion before the Committee be adopted; and let it not be said, that while those distinguished and meritorious officers are living, we withhold from them their bread, the just reward of their services, that when dead we give them only a stone.

Mr. Johnstone did not conceive the character of the officers alluded to, to be at all involved in the discussion of this motion. The question was, whether the application of the right hon. Gentleman was to be considered on the ground of right or liberality. The right hon. Gentleman had, in the course of his speech, deduced arguments in support of the proposition
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from both those sources; but the subject before the Committee might be reduced to a narrow compass, namely, whether those ships were or were not prizes. The inclination of his mind was, that as they came into the hands of the officers mentioned, not in consequence of a capture, but of a convention with the people of Toulon, they could not be legally deemed prizes to our navy, who received the surrender; and as we were not able to convey those ships to Louis XVII. for whose use they were transferred to us, the right of property and of disposing of them vested, according to law, in his Majesty, and not in those who had obtained possession of them in the first instance. The remunerations granted to the captors of the Dutch fleet at the Helder, or to those who destroyed, &c. the Danish fleet, at Copenhagen, he maintained had no analogy to the case now under consideration, inasmuch as, in the former of the two other instances, the prizes were such as would have been condemned in the court of Admiralty, and in the latter the ships were actually libelled before an arrangement was made by Government to indemnify the captors. If, however, it should be determined to grant the large sum specified in the motion, notwithstanding all the objections to it on the score of right, and notwithstanding the present peculiar circumstances of the country, he would put it to the equity of the House, whether the land army employed in this expedition had not an equal title to prize money with the seamen and marines? Upon every principle he was of opinion that they had a right to a fair proportion. As to the decision of the case altogether, he would much rather see it referred to the judgment of the learned Gentleman on the treasury bench (Sir Wm. Scott), in his official capacity, than have it brought at all before that House. That learned Gentleman would not, he was pretty confident, determine in favour of the argument which the right hon. Member had derived from a notion of right upon the part of the persons to whom this motion alluded; and if it could not be maintained, which he thought it would be a boldness to expect, that those officers, &c. could not claim reimbursement on the ground of right, and that the application was to rest upon liberality, could it be pretended, he would ask, that this sum was not infinitely more than the services performed at Toulon entitled the force engaged to look for? Could it be said, that to accede to it would not be inconsistent with that economy which Ministers had observed since they came into office, and for which indeed they had had no example from

their predecessors? In concluding, the hon. Member contended, that the long time which had elapsed since the affair at Toulon took place, during which no attempt had been made by the parties interested to prefer any claim in a legal way, to the investigation of which the war could have been no bar, was in itself a presumptive evidence that those parties felt themselves that they had no right to the remuneration which the motion before the Committee proposed to grant them.

Sir Home Popham spoke to the following effect:—Sir, the question before the Committee, on which I did not expect any difference of opinion, is so intimately connected with the profession to which I have the honour of belonging, that I cannot resist offering a few remarks on the subject, especially as neither the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer, nor the hon. Gentleman who spoke last, have fairly and correctly stated the case with respect to this point; whether the French fleet was delivered over to the noble and gallant Admiral, or whether it was taken possession of by a military operation. That the operation might have been combined I have no doubt, and that intercourse might have been had with some of the factious in Toulon is also very probable, but the predominant feature was certainly military. On the 23d of August, Lord Hood appeared off Toulon with 14 sail of the line, where he found Admiral St. Julien (a creature of the Republic) in command of the French fleet of seventeen sail of the line, and who had suspended Admiral Trogoffe from all his functions and command, and consequently all the expected co-operation on the part of Trogoffe was at an end, and the gallant Admiral decided to attack the French fleet in the formidable position in which it was moored; and like a great General (having long established his character as a great Admiral) he disembarked the part of the army serving in his fleet with the marines, and took possession of Fort La Malgue. After this was achieved, did he not send a flag of truce to St. Julien the French Admiral, and make a disposition to attack his fleet at anchor from the batteries of La Malgue, and the co-operation of the British fleet? These preparations, and the name of the noble Admiral, and the recollection of the victories that composed its glory, had the greatest effect on St. Julien: the British Admiral's conduct at Basse Terre, where he manœuvred the French Admiral De Grasse from his anchorage, and took possession of it, was fresh in St. Julien's memory; he knew he had to contend with a man who had
been

been in the habits of turning his countrymen out of their roadsteads and taking possession of them, and that the same military talent might be applied here. Shall we, says St. Julien to his partisans, give another opportunity of adding new laurels to the English flag, and increasing the disgrace of France? No! let us retire, let us join the army of Carteaux, rather than risk the issue of a battle. These were the motives which induced St. Julien to desert his fleet, accompanied with the crews of seven ships most attached to him, at the very moment the British Admiral was about to enter to attack him. Can this then be called a convention? No; there was no condition, no convention between the contending commanders. And even in this, as well as after Lord Hood entered Toulon, he was seen to act not only as a gallant naval officer, but also as a great General, and consummate statesman; and then whether the fleet surrendered, or was taken for Louis XVI. the operation to all intents and purposes must be considered as a military operation, and is entitled to the highest praise. It was difficult to say upon what ground a claim so well founded could be objected to. If the idea is to go abroad that the liberality of the House will not shew itself to signal services at the recommendation of his Majesty, what discouraging effects may it not produce? Even at this moment, when Lord Nelson is blockading that same port of Toulon; when perhaps he is on the eve of capturing the French fleet either by valour or negotiation, is it to be held out that for such services there is to be no reward, because they may be said to be achieved by a convention? I contend that Lord Hood's conduct throughout the whole of this business evinced the highest sense of honour, and the most refined delicacy. The question in my opinion is of the first importance, and I recommend it to the serious consideration of the House, and warn them how they permit either sophistry, or a mere quibble of the law to frustrate the claims of acknowledged merit to the strongest proofs of their liberality. Aware of the great and interesting business now standing in succession in the order of the day, I shall not trouble the Committee further, and earnestly hope the remuneration recommended by his Majesty in council will be voted without another dissentient voice.

Mr. Creevey considered this motion to involve a question more proper for the Admiralty Court to decide upon than that House, and as he knew of nothing more dangerous than any interference on the part of the House with whatever be-

longed to the jurisdiction of the courts of law, he would oppose the motion.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* explained what he had said with respect to the original capture of those ships. He admitted that there was something of the character of a convention about it, but not such a one as that attributed to it by the learned Gentleman on the other side. He denied that he had ever pressed this motion as a claim of right; he urged it as an appeal to the liberality of the House; and he confessed that he felt it to be an appeal to something more than liberality, considering all the circumstances, although he had relied on that principally, and he was persuaded it was that to which a deserving British officer could never apply in vain. When the peculiar nature of this case was candidly viewed, when the time which those ships had been in use, and the benefit resulting therefrom to the country was considered, he trusted that no difference of opinion could arise as to the propriety of granting to those gallant officers a full equivalent, particularly as it must be recollected that the application was not new in principle, but recognised by the cases to which he had already referred, cases which he contended were analogous to that before the Committee.

Dr. Laurence wished it to be distinctly understood, that liberality was the only ground upon which this motion rested; and in such a case he certainly was not disposed to be a nigardly remunerator to any of those gallant men who formed the pride and glory of the country. The learned Gentleman took notice of the remarks of the hon. Admiral (Sir Home Popham) that he should accede to the motion before the Committee lest the rejection of it should damp the zeal of our fleets, particularly that now probably before Toulon. For himself he felt no apprehension on that score. Whatever might be the result of the present motion, he knew the gallant and disinterested character of our navy too well to suppose that any consideration of gain could stimulate them, or any apprehension of loss could restrain them from the utmost exertion of their duty. He recommended that further time should be taken fully to examine the nature of this question before the motion should be adopted; and he thought that a motion of this nature should be preceded by a resolution of the House as to the fact of the merit of the force to whom the proposed reward was to be given. He concluded with acknowledging the conduct of Ministers, in thus submitting the measure to the consideration of the House, to be no-
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thing more than a performance of their duty ; but deprecated any hasty decision.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that the learned Gentleman had done Ministers nothing more than justice in stating, that they had brought this motion forward from a sense of duty. As to the distinction made between the grounds of right and liberality, the proposition of this claim to Parliament was itself a proof that it was not conceived to rest upon the ground of right ; for if it was, no such application need have been made. Neither of the cases referred to, namely, those of the *Helder* and *Copenhagen*, were brought before Parliament. The right of his Majesty to grant a remuneration for those ships was not doubted ; but yet, from the amount of the present claim, and from the time which had gone by since the expedition to *Toulon*, referred to in the motion, an application to Parliament was deemed the proper mode of proceeding.

Sir Home Popham, in allusion to the notice taken of his sentiments by the learned Gentleman on the lower bench, said, that perhaps in his anxiety for the adoption of the motion before the House, he might have used expressions too strong ; but yet he hoped it was not supposed that he could be capable of thinking a British seaman would be influenced by such motives as the learned Gentleman had inferred from those expressions.

Dr. Laurence said, he had only animadverted on the sentiment referred to by the hon. Admiral, in order to have it disclaimed.

Mr. IV. Smith thought, that when it was proposed to vote away a sum of such magnitude as that specified in the motion, no business about to be brought forward should prevent Gentlemen from fully stating their opinions as to the justice and necessity of the vote. However much he respected the character of the navy in general, or admired the conduct of the gallant admirals to whom the motion referred, or however warm his friendship for naval officers who were interested in the motion, he could not persuade himself to vote for the proposition before the Committee under the present circumstances, although he came down to the House almost resolved to do so. This opinion he confessed was changed, by the arguments he had heard, and which convinced him that further time was necessary to inquire into the case. It was necessary to ascertain whether these ships were valued properly, whether the sum proposed to be granted was too much or too little, and to whom and how

how it ought to be distributed. If the claim was founded on right, the House should not usurp the privilege of the Admiralty Court by deciding upon it. These, however, were points upon which, if time were allowed, the House would be competent to determine fairly, and also upon that which was very material, namely, how many land troops co-operated with the naval force at Toulon, and what proportion of this prize money they were entitled to. He urged as an additional argument for farther time, that the proceedings of the privy council recommending this measure had only been printed two days. On the whole, there were many reasons for further time, and none that were forcible for the sudden discussion required by the right hon. Gentleman on the Treasury bench.

Admiral Berkeley said, that the soldiers on board Lord Hood's fleet at the time the French ships were taken possession of, were unquestionably entitled to their share of this prize money, but none of the troops which arrived at Toulon subsequent to that transaction.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* thought that there was no doubt that soldiers in the situation on board described by the hon. Admiral, would, in the distribution of the prize-money, be considered as marines.

Sir William Scott declined to give any opinion upon the general question implicated in this motion, as it came to be decided upon by him in other circumstances; but with respect to the subject alluded to by his right hon. Friend who spoke last, he stated that soldiers serving on board the fleets were entitled to their share of prize money as marines.

Mr. Kinnaird considered this a question of much importance. He would ask, whether, if the Bourbon family should be restored to the throne of France, the House might not be again called upon to give a remuneration for those ships? He thought such a claim in such an event not improbable, and for that and other reasons he would oppose the motion, and move the previous question.

This motion was considered irregular in a Committee.

Mr. Johnstone observed, that Lord Mulgrave was at Toulon, and asked if it was intended in the proposed distribution of this prize money that his Lordship should share as a marine? The hon. Member said, that he understood there were four regiments of land forces at Toulon, who were entitled to their proportion of this remuneration.

Admiral Berkeley said, there were only two regiments serving as marines.

Sir

Sir C. Pole observed, that the force which was at Toulon under General O'Hara arrived after the ships were captured, and therefore had no claim to any of the money proposed to be voted.

Mr. Windham thought the result of all the discussion was this, that the House could not then come to any decision upon the subject, and considering the question exceedingly complicated, he wished that further time should be allowed to examine its details; so fully persuaded was he of the necessity for such time, that if any hon. Member would move that the Chairman should leave the chair, he would support him.

Mr. Kinnaird rose and moved that the Chairman should leave the chair.

This motion was negatived without a division; and the original motion was carried. The House resumed, and the report was ordered to be received the next day.

IRISH MILITIA.

Mr. Secretary Yorke moved the consideration of his Majesty's message, relative to the offers made by several regiments of Irish militia to extend their services to this country.

Sir F. Burdett immediately rose to state, that he wished to take the earliest opportunity of calling the attention of the House to this subject, which he thought involved constitutional questions of the highest importance. He would not then go into any discussion on the business, but wished it to be understood that he should, on a future day, bring the matter under consideration.

Mr. Secretary Yorke, after the reading of the message, alluded to the satisfaction which he was sure, in common with every other Member of the House, he felt, at the patriotic display exhibited by the militia of Ireland, in offering to extend their services to this country. They had nobly come forward at a great crisis, when this part of the united kingdom was threatened by a most formidable invasion, and when the means of carrying that attempt into effect had been allowed a long interval to be carried into perfection. Such a display of loyalty and attachment to the constitution of the united empire, must preclude every idea of opposition to the address, which he should feel it his duty to move on the message, which had been read to the House. It was, in the true sense of the word, a liberal and generous return to that example of similar disinterestedness and patriotism, which,

which, on a former occasion, when Ireland was threatened with terrible disasters, had been displayed by the militia of this country. Though the message of his Majesty referred to this particular point, yet as it was in the contemplation of his Majesty's Ministers to introduce some measures calculated to place the military force of the country on a more extensive establishment, he hoped he should meet with the indulgence of the House if he took the present opportunity of explaining generally what was the nature of the improvements to be introduced. Before he entered on this statement, he however wished to call the attention of the House to some views respecting the present situation of the army, which had been very much misrepresented throughout the country. With this view he thought it must be considered important by the House to compare what was the actual amount of our military establishment at the present, and at two preceding periods. The periods to which he referred were October 1801, when the preliminaries were signed, the state of the army in the beginning of April 1803, and on the first of March in the present year. He should begin by referring to what was the actual state of our army at the beginning of the present month. At the present moment the force of the country amounted to two hundred and fifty-two thousand eight hundred and forty-one, composed of regular cavalry, of regiments of the line, and of militia. The amount of the artillery is about fourteen thousand. He wished next to advert to what was the state of our military force in the beginning of October 1801. In the one case it was to be considered that there was a renewal of hostilities not extending beyond ten months, whereas in the other the war had continued for more than nine years. In the first period after a war of nine years, the total amount of our military force of every description did not exceed two hundred and sixty-six thousand eight hundred and ninety-five men; so that the total difference in that period, and at the beginning of March, was not more than fourteen thousand on the whole view of our military establishment. Our military force at this last period, it was to be observed also, included twenty-five thousand fencibles, a description of force which was at this moment not in existence. He wished next to allude to what was the state of the army in April 1803, a month after the delivery of his Majesty's message, and previous to the declaration of hostilities. The whole amount of the regular cavalry, infantry, and militia, in England and Ireland, was upwards of 124,000 men. There

There was nothing surely in this statement which shewed that the Government had suffered the military establishment to fall lower than the circumstances of the country required: but in October 1801, after a war of nine years, the force in existence in Great Britain and Ireland, was more than 30,000 below what it is in March 1804; and in March 1804 the force is more than 60,000 above what it was in 1803. As to the number of regular infantry in Ireland, he wished to put the House in possession of the real state of facts. In 1801 the number of the regular infantry in that part of the united kingdom, was about 12,000, the number of fencibles was 20,000, and the number of militia was about 28,000. But how did the matter stand under the present circumstances? There were now in Ireland upwards of 28,000 of the finest and best disciplined regular infantry that ever belonged to the British empire; besides 22,000 good militia. It was clear, indeed, that during the late war, there was nominally a greater force in Ireland, but it was not less clear, that the description of force now employed, was much superior to what was then relied on for the security of that country. In Great Britain and Ireland now, our regular infantry was no less than ninety thousand, whereas in 1801 it was not above fifty thousand. This, upon the whole, was a degree of force which he conceived must shew, that no exertion had been spared to make adequate provision for our defensive system. Formidable as were the dangers which threatened the country, they were, he was convinced, not by any means so alarming as those which hung over the country during the time of the existence of the northern confederacy. If that confederacy had not been put down by the bravery of our naval defenders, and if it had not pleased Providence to cut off the late Emperor of Russia, the consequences might have been formidable in the highest degree. But having stated this, he thought that he should not be supposed guilty of any extraordinary degree of presumption when he contended, that it was not fair or just to assert that no adequate efforts had been employed to collect or embody the force of the country. He wished for this purpose to describe in a few words, what was the real amount of the force actually collected in the course of fourteen months, computing from December 1802, to February in 1804. The right hon. Gentleman accordingly went over the different descriptions of force raised within this period, the result of which he stated to be, that there was a total of no less than a hundred and ninety-two thousand

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thousand one hundred and sixty-nine men, raised for the various species of the public service. Allowing then, that the danger which threatened the country had been ever so formidable; admitting that the zeal and energy of the country had been ever so spontaneous, he must be permitted to observe, that the collection of such a force within fourteen months, was the most satisfactory evidence against any charge, that a proper degree of vigilance had not been employed on the part of his Majesty's Government. The circumstances under which this vast augmentation to the national force had been procured, were also another evidence which disproved any want of proper exertion to provide for the security of the empire. The fourteen months, during which this supply had been procured, had been marked by the cheapness and abundance of provisions of all sorts. There was no stagnation of trade. On the contrary, he had every reason to believe that the shops of the manufacturers were as full as at any former period. So much indeed was this the case, that no temptation was held out to recruiting hitherto for the army or navy, arising from want of employment. For defensive purposes then there was no reason to contend that suitable provision had not been made, and a defensive system was the first object of consideration. The next question came to be, in what way a disposable force for offensive purposes was to be procured. For almost any possible idea of defensive contest, our force, what had been already done, was perhaps even more than adequate; but in the present contest we had to look forward to more distant and more extensive objects. In the prosecution of the war, a happier period of its progress might arrive. The powers of the Continent, now bent under the iron yoke of France, now levelled to the dust under the detested sceptre of a most odious despotism, might be enabled to raise up their heads against their oppressor; and what could then be more important than for Britain to have the means of acting offensively in a contest in which the liberties of all nations were so materially involved? Under such circumstances we might be able not only to shew France, but the whole world, that this country, even single-handed, was capable of maintaining a contest with the most powerful and the most ambitious state in Europe. With a view then to such operations, his Majesty's Ministers had looked forward to the means of augmenting our disposable force. The plans for procuring this augmentation were already partly in progress, and others would be produced

produced as soon as circumstances could admit. He wished to take the present opportunity of laying before the House a general outline of these plans, reserving the details till a future period, when it would be his duty to submit the whole business to the full and fair consideration of the House. What he was desirous of now doing was, to state what was the plan of Government on this very interesting subject, and what were the means, direct and collateral, for carrying his propositions into effect. What had hitherto been actually determined on was, that an augmentation of the cavalry to the amount of 3500, was to take place. The guards were also to be augmented to the amount of two thousand, to be incorporated with the several battalions. Eight new regiments of infantry, consisting each of a thousand men, were to be raised, and ten battalions to be attached to old regiments to be formed, which, with some other inferior augmentations, would make up a force of twenty-five thousand men. It was also proposed that the foreign corps should, as far as possible, be encouraged. The House would recollect, that during the late war these corps were numerous and well appointed. In the present war it was obvious that the difficulty of raising such corps was much greater than during the late war; but every exertion was used to give every sort of encouragement to this means of augmenting the regular disposable force. From the troops to be so raised, and the corps to be employed as levies for America and the West Indies, the whole additional force would not be short of forty thousand men. The next question came to be, by what mode this great augmentation to our regular force could be most easily and most conveniently obtained. On this head he would beg leave to state to the House his ideas as briefly as possible. It was not by any means his intention, in any of the alterations he meant to bring forward, to enter on any radical change in the military system of the country. A right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Windham) had, on various occasions, alluded to the necessity of new modelling the whole of that establishment, and the expediency of placing the terms of service, as far as the period of time was concerned, on a quite different footing from that on which they now stood. He did not at all mean to deny that this was a subject highly worthy of the attention not only of the military administration of the country, but of the most serious consideration of the legislature. It was, however, a subject not to be entered on without the gravest inquiry, and without weighing well all the

the circumstances connected with the effect of a change of so extensive a nature as that to which he had now alluded. He declined entering into argument on the subject on the present occasion, and he adverted to it principally with the view of preventing any objections to the propositions he meant to submit to the House, drawn from an opinion that the system to which he had now referred had escaped his notice. It would have been easy for him, had he entered on the subject, to have shewn that even if it had been brought forward at this time, a considerable time must have elapsed before it was brought to any sort of perfection, or rather, before it had been attempted to be reduced to practice. In the Austrian service the plan of limited service had been decided on so far back as the period of the conclusion of the treaty of Luneville, but it was not till the present year that the measure was first attempted to be reduced to any extensive practical arrangement. If this was the case in Austria, where colonial service was utterly unknown, but where the engagements of the soldiery were confined to a few of the neighbouring provinces of the same empire, how much more evident was it that so important an alteration could not be introduced into our service without the fullest and gravest deliberation as to the consequences likely to result from it, not only as applicable to a great crisis, but as a permanent establishment? Without then going further into this business at present, he would proceed to mention, what after the fullest consideration appeared to him the means best calculated, in the first instance, to encourage and promote the improvements which he wished to establish. With a view of the present state of our defensive force we were, as he had already observed, to look to the most effectual mode of increasing our regular disposable military establishment—[Here there seemed some inclination to laughter on the other side of the House.]—The right hon. Gentleman proceeded to observe, that perhaps some hon. Gentlemen opposite might think this declaration a very extraordinary admission. He really could not view it in this light, and he might further be allowed to say, that he saw no room for exultation, even if the admission were conceded on his part. He needed not to remind those hon. Gentlemen, that even the wisest administrations were sometimes condescending enough to give up plans which for years they had attempted to carry on without success. What Ministers had first above all things to consider was, how, in the shortest given space, the defensive system, which an extraordinary

traordinary danger called for, could be most speedily completed. The militia and the army of reserve, therefore, first engaged their attention, and to their completion the whole efforts of Government were directed. At this moment the militia of England was within five thousand of being filled up, whereas last year the whole of it was to be levied and enrolled. The militia of Ireland was then in the same state, whereas now less than five hundred men were necessary to complete all the quotas of the different counties. With regard to the army of reserve acts, he had to observe, that though, as applicable to a great immediate object, they had been found to be highly important, it could not be considered as at all inconsistent to suspend them for a particular period, after the object which they were intended to accomplish was in a great measure effected. He was aware that the bill for raising the army of reserve had been the ground of numerous objections, even when it was first brought forward. With what propriety this measure was at the time undertaken a short statement would enable the House to decide. The object then in view was to procure the greatest number of recruits for our regular defensive force in the shortest possible time. He had no hesitation in declaring, that in no possible way could this have been procured so rapidly, as by the bill which had been the ground of so much animadversion. The fact was, that though the bill was not passed till about the end of July, the returns given on the 25th of August, shewed, that in England alone, no less than fifteen thousand men had been raised under the provisions of the act. By the month of October, the number was increased to about twenty-five thousand, and this number, with the numbers raised in Scotland and Ireland, made the whole amount no less than thirty-six thousand eight hundred and eighty-five. Out of this number many of the oldest regiments had been filled up, and he had the authority of the ablest officers to declare, that the appearance, the discipline, and general conduct of these recruits was the subject of general admiration. Of the number he had mentioned, considerably upwards of ten thousand had volunteered for general service, and when he took into consideration and referred to the whole amount of the men procured for the augmentation of our general force, he would beg leave to ask, whether any gentleman would seriously affirm, that so great an augmentation could have been procured by any other possible measure? This statement was the best justification which he conceived it possible

possible to bring forward in support of the primary expediency of the bill for raising the army of reserve. But while he asserted this generally, he thought it but fair to admit, that for the last two or three months the recruiting for the army of reserve had been in a great measure suspended. He believed he was correct when he stated that, during that period, the numbers previously obtained were barely supported. This suspension of the recruiting was to be attributed to a variety of causes. It arose in a great measure from that infamous system of crimping, which was so prevalent, particularly in the metropolis and its vicinity. It was also to be to a considerable degree ascribed to that extensive desertion which a sort of felonious speculation on the enormous bounties had so extensively encouraged. He could mention many other causes of the suspension of the recruiting for the army of reserve, but without insisting on this point he would only say that, under these circumstances, it appeared that, as the first direct means of accomplishing the objects which he had stated, he meant to propose, that the further balloting for the army of reserve should, for a time, be suspended. He had no idea in the first instance of repealing all the provisions of the act, as this might be attended with inconvenience. A suspension of actual balloting would have the effect of preventing the inconveniencies to which he had adverted, and the deficiencies in the different counties could be commuted for a fair and reasonable pecuniary allowance. Penalties had already been incurred to a large amount, therefore to commute the penalty in the way now proposed was what could form the ground of no reasonable objection. As to Ireland, though the recruiting for the army of reserve still proceeded, he did not mean to make any distinction for that country, but intended that the suspension of the ballot should extend to every part of the united kingdom. He did not mean to introduce any other alterations at present into this part of the system of the army, though he allowed that it formed a subject of very serious consideration, and might hereafter with great propriety be submitted to the attention of the House. The next point to which he wished to apply his observations was, the removal of all competition from the recruiting for the regular army, and the abolition of those high bounties, the pernicious effects of which had been so extensively experienced. He had already alluded to the system of crimping, so prevalent in the metropolis, and the extinction of this competition by the lowering of the bounties,

ties, would necessarily tend, more than any other circumstance, to the abolition of a practice, to the prevention of which it might even become necessary to apply some legislative provision. By putting down this system, the officers of the Government would be the only persons in the market; and it did not occur to him that the raising of the trifling number wanted to fill up the militia could at all operate in the form of a competition worth the slightest notice. By the equalization of the bounties, which it was necessary for him to state as one of the improvements necessary, in addition to those he had already mentioned, the recruiting service must derive the most important advantage. While the bounties continued unequal, numbers of those who had no disinclination to enter into the army kept back from day to day, in expectation of profiting by this delay. When, however, this object was removed, they would avail themselves of the first offers which presented themselves. When the bounty was to be equalized, the great object was to hold out sufficient inducements, without however countenancing any thing like extravagant encouragements to enter into the army. From the result of communication with all the best informed military characters in the country, he thought the bounty for the infantry should not exceed ten guineas, and to this would of course be added a certain allowance for levy money, for the encouragement of the officers employed. What the amount of this would be would depend on the degree of difficulty which attended the procuring of the recruits. This was entirely a military question. He did not make this statement on his own authority. It was founded on the opinions of military men, and by their opinion on such a subject it was natural that the House should be guided. He wished next shortly to advert to the collateral means of encouragement to which he looked forward for the completion of the plan which he had shortly sketched out in the beginning of his speech. The first of these collateral means the House would be aware was the measure alluded to in his Majesty's message. It was intended for this purpose that in the first instance 10,000 of the Irish militia should be brought over to this country. By the introduction of such an additional force, a similar number of our regular troops would be left disposable for purposes of general service. The House were sufficiently convinced that the Irish were, above almost any other people, possessed of the qualities which fitted them most speedily to imbibe the habits of a soldier. They were
remarkable

remarkable for that *non chalance* which was so essential to the circumstances of a military life. But while so large a body of force was to be introduced to this country, the garrison of Ireland was not to be neglected. With the view then of replacing this force he meant to move for leave to bring in a bill for the purpose of augmenting the numbers of the Irish militia to what they were during the latter part of the late war. The original number of the Irish militia was 18,000, but by augmenting the companies from 70 to 100 each, the number was made up to twenty-eight thousand. It was proposed that the same plan should now be adopted, and by this means the defence of Ireland would not suffer by the withdrawing of the proportion of militia to be brought over to this country. The right hon. Gentleman, after a few more observations on this point, alluded to the latest returns of the numbers and efficiency of the yeomanry and volunteer corps throughout the country. By these returns he was enabled to state to the House, that the actual numbers of yeomanry and volunteers who had been inspected by general officers in different districts, were such as must materially increase confidence in the security of the country. By these returns the number of cavalry was no less than twenty-seven thousand; of artillery upwards of four thousand; and of infantry, rank and file, upwards of three hundred thousand. He could not assert that all of these were actually armed. But he could affirm, that the cavalry were all completely provided; that the artillery were fully prepared for service; and that of the infantry, about two hundred and fifty thousand were armed with firelocks. Since that time a great number of additional firelocks had been issued, and even if a great crisis were to arrive, and the enemy were to effect a landing, he had to add, that those who could not have firelocks assigned them, would have the use of pikes to an unlimited amount. He spoke of this state of our volunteer force in terms of the highest exultation. He desired Gentlemen to consider that the volunteer force was one constantly advancing in improvement. Arguments applicable to the discipline of the volunteers in August or September, were by no means applicable to their state at the present moment. If Gentlemen kept this in view, he believed that the House would hear a great deal less of the arguments against the volunteer system. The right hon. Gentleman, after an eulogium on the sea fencibles, concluded by moving an address agreeably to the terms of his Majesty's message.

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The following exhibit at one view the various statements made by Mr. Yorke, in the course of the preceding speech.

Comparative State of the Army.

		Officers and Men
March 1, 1804,	Total effective Force	252,841
October 1, 1801,	- Ditto	266,895
		<hr/>
		Difference 14,054
		<hr/>
		N. C. & Gunners
March 1, 1804,	Royal Artillery	14,202
October 1, 1801,	- Ditto	12,287
		<hr/>
		Difference 1,915
		<hr/>

The 252,841 consists of.

Regular Cavalry	20,324
Regular Infantry	133,267
Militia	99,250
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252,841	
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The 266,895 consisted of

Regular Cavalry	26,350
Regular Infantry	129,710
Fencibles	25,000
Militia	79,572
Invalids	6,263
<hr/>	
266,895	
<hr/>	

Effective force in Great Britain and Ireland, Jersey and Guernsey, October 1, 1801,

Including Artillery 179,426

Composition of the Infantry in Ireland, October 1, 1801.

Regulars	12,232
Fencibles	20,374
Militia (Irish)	28,000
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60,606	

Composition of the Infantry in Ireland, March 1, 1804.

Regulars	-	28,878
Militia (Irish)		22,174
		<hr/>
		51,052

Regular Infantry in Great Britain and Ireland, Jersey and Guernsey, March 1, 1804,

	90,000 Men
Deduct	26,199 Men of the Reserve not re-in-
	lifted for general service.
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Remains	63,801 disposable for foreign service.

Regular Infantry in Great Britain and Ireland, Jersey and Guernsey, on the 1st October 1801,

	50,000 Men
Deduct	24,428 Men enlisted from the Militia
	whose services were limited to
	Europe.
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Remains	25,572 Men, of whom
	7,051 were Invalids.
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Remains	18,521 for foreign service.

Volunteers in Great Britain returned effective and present on the 1st March, 1804, by the General Officers commanding Districts.

Cavalry	27,000
Artillery	4,000
Infantry	300,000
<hr/>	
Total	331,000

Of whom (Infantry) about 250,000 are armed with fire-locks, the rest with pikes.

Number

Number of Men raised for Sea and Land Service, &c. in
fourteen Months, from Dec. 1, 1802, to Feb. 1, 1804.

British Militia	-	-	-	70,076
Irish Ditto	-	-	-	19,259
A. of R. { English	-	-	-	25,310
{ Scots	-	-	-	4,707
{ Irish	-	-	-	6,789
Recruits for Regular Army	-	-	-	10,000
Artillery and G. Drivers	-	-	-	5,000
Marines	-	-	-	5,000
Seamen	-	-	-	46,500
				<hr/>
				192,641

Statement of proposed Augmentation.

1. New Levies of Infantry	-	-	18,000	} remains to be raised.
Augmentation of Cavalry (3500) began	-	-	2,891	
Ditto of Foot Guards (2000)	-	-	1,500	
			<hr/>	
			22,391	
2. Augmentation of Irish Militia	-	-	10,000	
3. Foreigners				
King's German Legion now raising	-	-	5,000	
York Rangers	-	-	1,000	
Maltese Battalion	-	-	2,000	
			<hr/>	
			40,391	
			<hr/>	
4. Levies in America and West Indies,				
Fencibles and Black Corps	-	-	4,000	
The Total for Colonial Service, America,				
West Indies, and Malta	-	-	8,759	
			<hr/>	

Levy of Men for Army of Reserve.

Bills passed July 6, 1803, for Great Britain.			
July 11, ——— for Ireland.			
First return for England, August 20th,	-	-	13,199
Ditto Scotland, August 25th,	-	-	2,706
			<hr/>
Raised in less than 4 weeks,			15,905

The address moved by Mr. Secretary Yorke having been read from the chair,

Mr Pitt spoke to the following purport :—I do not rise to trouble the House with any discussion at present ; the subject is indeed well deserving the attention of the House ; but the more proper time for discussing it will be when the different topics enlarged upon by the right hon. Gentleman to-night shall be brought forward in the shape of bills, when I shall take an opportunity of delivering my sentiments more at large. To this address I accede in common with the House, and all those who recollect with pleasure the cordiality and zeal of the militia of this country, who set to those of Ireland an example which has excited their emulation, and which they now, so much to their honour, imitate : this is a subject on which there can be no difference of opinion, but in which we must all feel equal delight. I do not think this an occasion on which it is necessary to enter at all into any discussion of the very interesting and important topics with which the right hon. Gentleman prefaced his motion for this address. I beg leave to say, that having in the course of the discussion of the subject lately under our consideration, expressed myself dissatisfied in many respects as to the state of the military defence, and not having been able to relieve my mind upon the whole of that subject, I must repeat that I retain the same sentiments still. I will however own, that I am in many respects satisfied by what I have heard to-night. Whenever I have ventured to trouble the House upon this subject, I never differed from the right hon. Gentleman in one proposition which his speech to-night proved, namely, that as far as numbers go there is no subject of blame to be attached any where : it has never been contended by me that the numbers raised in the course of the present war are not sufficient for our defence. How far, in the raising such numbers, merit is to be allowed to his Majesty's Government ; how much they have done to procure the proper means to improve such numbers and render them efficient by discipline ; how much encouragement has been held out to some descriptions of persons composing a part of those numbers ; how far Ministers have proceeded to give to the country the benefit it might have had from such numbers, are questions which are not necessarily to be mixed in this debate. I shall not introduce any topics of that nature at present ; whatever share Government may have had in producing these numbers of men for the general defence of the country,

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the ardour, the zeal, and the energy of the country; are manifested more than even the numbers can convey; and this affords to us the best pledge for our security in the hour of attack, and consciousness of invincible strength in the hour of danger, a security indeed against any danger by which this country may be threatened, and an assurance of triumph over any difficulty with which we may have to contend. But there is another point which cannot be ensured by zeal, and that is, whether the energy of the persons thus raised has been well directed? Whether they have been brought forward and improved in discipline so as to render their natural force most serviceable, and made most available to the security of the country? That is a point involving matters which it may be extremely interesting and highly important to discuss hereafter at a convenient opportunity, but I will not introduce these topics into discussion to embarrass the subject of the present day; I shall leave them to subsequent occasions, of which there will be many, when the bills come before us. But while I say I feel some satisfaction from what I heard to-night from the right hon. Gentleman, I mean, that my satisfaction arises chiefly from the amount of the force called into activity for our service, and the zeal and energy which the country has manifested for that purpose. In no part of the country do I apprehend any deficiency in zeal and energy; and with the magnitude of our force, in a collective sense, I am satisfied. On none of these points have I any anxiety; but on the subject of rightly improving such force by discipline, and rendering it more and more efficient for its purpose, have I day after day expressed my anxiety in this House, and this is the point on which I wish the public may never have reason to regret that more has not been done. Upon that matter I only throw out this as a hint, for at present I shall say no more upon it; neither will I enter minutely into other matters at this moment. I would just observe, in passing, that with respect to the militia, I am of opinion care should be taken that it be not made use of in a way that may impede the progress of the regular army or any other disciplined force; and unless I shall see occasion to change my opinion, I shall have to state more at large my sentiments upon this subject hereafter, and to submit that, under the present circumstances of the country, it will be desirable as vacancies shall occur, to have them filled up in a different mode from what has been hitherto adopted; and if they are raised by ballot

lot as formerly, yet that they shall soon be put in a state in which when trained, they may be at liberty to enlist as much as they choose into the regular service. I enter as strongly as the right hon. Gentleman himself can do into the propriety of preventing as much as possible the raising men for the militia and the army of reserve from interfering with the recruiting of the regular army; I enter also into the spirit, and feel the absolute necessity of a measure that may crush the abominable practice of crimping. I wish very much to see some measure adopted, to relieve the country from the great weight and pressure of those high and enormous bounties, which now have been too long given for men in the militia and the army of reserve, which has, in addition to this evil, another of considerable magnitude attached to it, that of temptation to desertion; but doubt whether you would not prevent a great deal of progress in the service, if you did not allow persons from all services to enlist as they choose into the regular service, and supply the vacancy in some manner like that which is now done in the army of reserve, rendering that a sort of vehicle by which to convey men who are trained and disciplined into the regular service. I throw this out as a mere hint for consideration, before the progress of the army of reserve is suspended. The right hon. Gentleman has not entered into any detail of the mode by which he means to raise the men; if he can raise as many new regiments and battalions as may be wanted by direct recruiting at moderate bounties, I should be glad; if there be reasonable hopes of such a plan, I should wish it to be tried, and should most heartily wish it success. I do not say how far it may or may not be advantageous to the country to adopt a total suspension of the army of reserve for a while, but I am strongly of opinion, that the successful augmentation of the army, and the keeping it up effectually in time of war, must be done by some measure that has at least the effect of keeping down bounties, and that can never be accomplished until the present competition in the services shall have been abolished. I think, however, that you cannot have the men with the same promptness, nor under the same discipline, without a measure somewhat partaking of the character of your army of reserve, and that will operate in different parts of the counties more directly than any other. Some regulations with regard to substitutes, and to confine the bounties within a moderate compass, will, I believe, be found more effectual than any

any other mode. I think, however, that to supply the army in this way, will be found a more effectual mode than the ordinary progress of recruiting for the army in the first instance; for I have been told by many men of experience, and I have found by my own, that men, as indeed it is natural we should expect without experience, are more ready to enter into a species of service that is limited in extent and duration, which is the nature of the army of reserve, than into one of general service, which has no limits of time or place. This we experienced during last war, in the militia. We have already found in this war that men have been ready to enter into the army of reserve, independent of the bounty, on account of the service being limited in point of time; and we have found that when men come together, and after they have acquired military habits, they take inclinations from each other, and are tempted by a natural spirit of courage and emulation among their comrades to extend their services, and upon which they manifest a desire of going into the regular army: I therefore believe that as a matter of permanent policy, as well as for a temporary purpose, or immediate effort, you will find it prudent, instead of giving up the system of the army of reserve, to retain something of its principle: and indeed I collected from the speech we have just heard, that it was not the intention of the right hon. Gentleman to give it up altogether, but only to suspend the provisions of it for a while. I should rather think it better to shape the plan of the army of reserve differently from what it is at present, and to attach it afterwards, and as much as you may, to the regular force, but uniting it, by means of moderate bounties, to the different battalions, as second regiments or battalions; for, by this mode, you will have all the advantages of local attachments which men have, and the willingness they have to go together in almost every service. This will in a considerable degree be always the case where men are raised by districts instead of being collected by a plan of general and indiscriminate recruiting; and the deficiency may be supplied by fresh ballot. I do not know whether I have not branched out further than was necessary to express my perfect acquiescence in the present address, reserving, as I do, perfect and entire freedom to speak on the different measures when they come before the House. I have not stated these sentiments or opinions in opposition to the motion now before the House; but I thought it necessary to throw out these ideas, lest it should be supposed by my silence that I had altered my opinion

nion in some respects, in consequence of my seeming to acquiesce in all that has been stated by the right hon. Gentleman. On the contrary, from what I have said now, I trust it appears to the House, that nothing which I have taken the liberty, on former occasions, to recommend in our military system, has been in the least degree altered by any proposition which I have heard to-night.

Mr. Windham—As there will be a considerable interval between the present period and the final discussion of the subject now before the House, I shall not be under the necessity of detaining the House so long as I otherwise should perhaps feel it my duty to do; but it is necessary for me to observe, that although the right hon. Gentleman has gone into the whole measure at once, on a general statement of the matter which he is hereafter to propose, which may therefore be hereafter discussed; yet those who feel like myself, must be anxious not to appear to assent to all he states, and therefore I shall say a few words on the subject of the message from his Majesty, and the address proposed by the right hon. Gentleman. There cannot be the least hesitation to assent to the first, and indeed what may be called the formal part of the address to his Majesty, which returns thanks to his Majesty for his gracious communication; as little objection can be made to the acknowledgment of the zeal of the militia of Ireland, or of the people of that country in the common cause; but it remains for me and for those who think with me to say, we are not prepared to adopt measures to carry into execution any particular plan until we have had an opportunity of considering what that plan is. The first and leading objection I have to accepting the present offer of the Irish militia is an objection to the principle of the thing, that is, because by it a body of men assembled for efficient military purposes are to go beyond the terms of their original service. I do not say that no condition of things can do away this objection, because there may be a condition of things which will do away all objections of whatever kind; but I say, that condition of things does not exist at this moment: and an objection it always will remain, let the condition of things be what it may; and the only question is, whether such a condition exists as to overrule that objection. I am of opinion, that in the present case, that condition has no such force at the present moment. I felt this objection strongly, at the time the English militia made their offer to go to Ireland, and however useful, and perhaps decisive that measure was upon the

the occasion to which it was applied, certainly that measure was not carried into effect without producing the inconveniences which I have alluded to, and that I took the liberty of stating at the time. I am confirmed, instead of being shaken, in the opinion I then entertained upon that subject; for indeed the accepting such a service as this, although offered, is nothing more than what may, in some degree, be called a departure from good faith:—it is not a breach of good faith, but it is a sort of misprision of good faith, for although the leading part of such a service as this may be voluntary, and the offer spontaneous, yet, as to the remainder, it may be absolutely compulsory. If a part of a large military body make the offer, how is the remainder to refuse it? You do not seem to know the possible, nor seem very clearly to see the probable consequences of such measures as these, for there are many evils attending them: one of these evils, besides the point which partakes of the nature of a breach of faith, is this, it has a very dangerous effect upon military discipline, especially upon such a force as that of a militia force; and to illustrate this I should like to ask Gentlemen who went to Ireland with our militia, what passed as they were going there with their regiments; whether they did not hear some things that were utterly subversive of discipline? I would ask, whether the acceptance of such a service is not a species of suspension of discipline? Putting yourself into a situation to ask a favour of a military body of men, for a favour this is, cannot be said to be free from danger. It may be said, that this is only renewing what I formerly said; that may be true, and yet the observation may not have lost its force because it happens to be an old one, and the objection may be as good now as if it had never been before made; besides, I do not see that Ireland is less in danger than Great Britain. When you say you let loose a part of your disposable force in this country, that is to say, that you have so far a power to employ as you please the regular force which you could not otherwise detach, you must remember that precisely to the same amount you must make fast your force in Ireland. I have by these measures pretty good testimony of the propriety of the opinions I have formerly given on these points. This asking favour where you ought only to command, this begging of them will have a bad effect; it will introduce among our military bodies a species of *Saturnalia* which may be extremely dangerous; for which reasons, although I agree in the first part of the address, as I have stated already, yet I dis-

sent from the latter part of it. I would really say no more for the present purpose, than that we will take the matter into our consideration, for I think we ought to reserve to ourselves the mode in which we shall proceed, at least until we have some time to deliberate upon it; for we should not consider the question as a mere transfer of force from the one country to the other; but this question involves a consideration of increasing the militia force of Ireland, a force which is not raised as in this country by ballot, and this goes, like many other measures to which I and some others have been constantly objecting, to the prejudice of increasing the regular army, and in that view it is particularly objectionable to me. Many of the propositions of the right hon. Gentleman to-night I cannot oppose, without giving up a great number of opinions I have delivered on various former occasions in this House, and in which opinions I have been every day more and more confirmed, as the subjects have been presented to my mind; such as that of the propriety of putting an end to the competition of the services by which bounties have been increased; the taking the matter of recruiting entirely into the hands of Government, instead of leaving individuals to vie with each other, and creating an expence so enormous and burthensome. These and some other points stated to-night by the right hon. Gentleman, are what I have stated several times, and a great while ago in this House. These are now to be adopted, though then it seems they were not mature, and were therefore rejected. It appears as if reason to his Majesty's Ministers was like fruit, not fit to eat in less than twelve months, for it is now that distance of time since they were offered; but at last they have been thought fit for the table of the right hon. Gentleman, and so they have been to-night accordingly served up. Upon one point I would ask for information, whether the new regiments are to be raised by recurring to the old and ruinous system of recruiting for rank; and if so, whether Ministers can hope for any power of legislation in such a case that will prevent a competition which must be most injurious in its effects? As to the point of the duration of the service in the regular army, I do not blame the right hon. Gentleman for not alluding to it sooner, for he had no measure before that had a bearing upon it: upon that subject I retain the opinion I have often delivered in this House. In a word, I agree with the right hon. Gentleman as to the propriety of reducing the enormous bounties

ties we have so long heard of, and they cannot be reduced without taking away the competition which has produced them. I agree with the right hon. Gentleman also in the propriety of Government taking the whole of the recruiting system into its own hands. I agree too, that the first part of the address ought to be voted, namely, thanks to his Majesty for his gracious communication, and an acknowledgment of the zeal of the people of Ireland; but there I think the address ought to stop for the present: I am not, without much further consideration, prepared to say yes to the remainder of the address, which will tie down this House to every thing but the mere detail of a system, the principles of which I do not approve, and for the consideration of which this House has not had time enough; and therefore I shall move, by way of amendment to this address, to leave out all the latter part of it, for the purpose of inserting the words, "and that we shall take the same into our most serious consideration."

The question being put,

Lord Castlereagh defended the whole of the system opened by his right hon. Friend (Mr. Yorke), and maintained, that although part of the plan went to adopt opinions delivered on former occasions by the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, which opinions were not adopted when they were offered, yet it did not follow that Ministers had acted unwisely; for although they now proposed to suspend the operation of the army of reserve act, and make some other regulations, yet the measure of the army of reserve, and the other measures, were perfectly wise at the time they were adopted; and Ministers would have been highly culpable if they had not adopted such measures, for by no other could they have raised the number of men that had been raised. The purpose of these measures having been answered, another policy became advisable under different circumstances. As to the apprehension, that some of the Irish militia might propose to come to this country, while others might be unwilling, he could remove all alarm on that subject, by assuring the House, that to his knowledge every man in the Irish militia was ready to join in the offer which had been made on this occasion. He approved, however, of not increasing the number of militia actually to be in Ireland. The vacancy occasioned by their coming here was only to be filled up, for it was desirable that the militia should bear proportion to the regular force in Ireland, the militia not exceeding

X x 2

23,000,

28,000; and the regular force in Ireland now being 35,000. The noble Lord then entered into an enumeration of the different numbers raised by recruiting for the line since the operation of the army of reserve act, comparing it with former periods, when there was no such act to operate, to shew that it had not by any means had the effect of diminishing the service, as had been supposed. He concluded with opposing the amendment, and giving his hearty assent to the original address.

Mr. Bussard said, if the amendment should be withdrawn, he should, for the present, only express a hope, that there would not be any thing hastily done in this important business; and he assured the House that he should oppose, at all times, every measure that tended to alter the fundamental principles of the militia laws.

Dr. Laurence declared that the situation of Ireland was not such as could afford the number of troops which were spoken of being sent out of the country. He was willing to accede to the strongest terms which could possibly be adopted with respect to the loyal and generous offer of the militiamen of Ireland, but he could not see that it was equally politic to accept of such offers now, as it was those of the English militia in 1798, when it was evident that every thing was wanting to crush and beat down a violent and powerful rebellion in their country. If a person was now to ask him in what part of the empire do you most want 10,000 additional troops, he must answer, in Ireland. And yet if he was asked from what part of the empire are 10,000 troops to be drawn by his Majesty's Ministers, he must say, from Ireland. He knew that there might be something of a doubt as to the propriety of suffering 28,000 of such a force as are called militia, to remain in Ireland with a regular force amounting to only about 30,000. But this could by no means justify the withdrawing of a disciplined force from a country which was particularly threatened with danger, and substituting in its place a new levy of recruits. This sort of wisdom in Ministers, together with their various alterations of opinion, he thought could only be accounted for by a comparison with their conduct upon a former occasion, when they committed and re-committed, and, to prevent the ridicule of such re-commitments, waited two days in order to bring forward a volume of new clauses.

Colonel Hutchinson declared that the address had his most hearty approbation, as far as it went with respect to the Irish militia;

militia; but he was sorry to see the word *several* in the resolution, when he was certain, that the *unanimous* determination of the Irish militia might be depended on, if their services were required. However their intentions were laudable and generous on their part, to assist the Crown in any part of the empire, and to make a return for the liberal assistance which had been afforded to their country at a former period, would any military man say that it was consistent with sound policy to withdraw disciplined troops from a country which was particularly and avowedly threatened with an immediate attack, and to place in their stead the same number of raw, undisciplined troops, which might require two years before they would arrive to an equal state of perfection? Was it wise, or was it just or politic, he would ask any country gentleman, when a country was threatened with immediate invasion, to withdraw 10,000 of as fine peasantry as any in the world, from its native resources of defence, and to withdraw along with them the gentlemen of the first respectability in wealth or influence within that country, from the assistance which they could otherwise afford it by their wisdom, their power and their connections? If England was situated as Ireland now is, would the country gentlemen of England think it reasonable? He knew that his Majesty's Ministers did not possess the power to enforce the extension of the services of a militia force, but he implored the country gentlemen to consider whether it would not be better to recommend a change of the militia of the two countries, than to leave 10,000 recruits to be raised in the place of an equal number of well disciplined troops, which were to be withdrawn from its defence. He had often recommended to his Majesty's Ministers to inquire into the state of that country; but unfortunately for that people, and to the disgrace of the Ministers, they had never thought fit to inquire into the business. He was convinced, however, that, if a number of the enlightened part of this country, the superior officers of the militia, were to go over to Ireland during a time of such peril as the present, and were to see the struggles that would be made by the great majority of that people in the defence of their King and of their Constitution, they would, nay they must, consistent with their own good sense, come back when the contest was over, with a thorough conviction on their minds, that those people deserved better treatment than they had hitherto received from the servants of that Crown for which they were ready to face any force, however formidable, or
however

however specious might be his pretences.' He would not consider himself bound to the support of any future measure that might be brought forward by the bill; but, inasmuch as the address expressed an approbation of the loyal and gallant offers which had been made, he would for the present give his vote in support of it, but would at a future period declare his sentiments freely with respect to any provision which might tend to weaken the native defence of the country in a moment so important as the present.

Mr. Banks did not wish the House to pledge itself to adopt a system before it was aware what that system was to be; for which reason he wished the House to inquire into this matter before it voted any thing further than thanks to the Throne. He deprecated any measure tending to weaken the force of Ireland, which was much more vulnerable than this country. He thought the proper sphere of the militia service was in its own home. He was adverse to the admission of a principle which would authorize a similar offer on the part of the English militia; and in the present circumstances of Ireland the force proposed to be taken from it must be replaced by some other. He was for the strict observance of public faith upon all occasions whatever. The events of 1798 were highly detrimental to the militia service in general; and he concluded by observing that, in his present view and under his present information of the subject, he should, if pushed to a vote, give it against the measure entirely.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer*, after noticing what he conceived as inconsistencies of the right hon. Gentleman (*Mr. Windham*) with respect to his opinions and conduct relative to a question similar to the present, passed on to the consideration of the subject before the House. The conduct of the Irish militia was worthy of the highest encomiums; but he deprecated the idea held out, that these spirited and patriotic offers could not be accepted without a breach of faith. The effect of the address was, that they would proceed to consider of such provisions as may be necessary to enable the Crown for a time to be limited to accept these offers: it was material to consider the best means of enabling the Crown to exercise a discretionary power on this occasion. On this he contended it was material that Parliament should come to a speedy determination. It was material that the Government of Ireland should know in the interval of the ensuing recess, that the Legislature was willing to accept of such

such laudable offers; it was right the Government of that part of the united kingdom should know the dispositions of Parliament upon the subject. With respect to the idea that Ireland was about to be stripped of 10,000 men by the measure, it was entirely unfounded. The present question merely respected the vesting a discretionary power in his Majesty to accept, in such proportions or at such periods as he should deem proper, a force to the amount stated; but this by no means implied that such removed troops were not to be replaced. Gentlemen who talked so seemed to forget that there was a middle description of force in this country, that was neither regular troops nor militia; he alluded to the army of reserve, with which the military establishment of Ireland might be repaid any number of troops taken therefrom. Such an arrangement might by that means be made as would liberate 5000 troops of the disposeable force of either country. It was not intended in the least to diminish the efficient forces of Ireland. One of the principal objects in such an interchange would be to augment the force of that description, which the right hon. Gentleman uniformly professed to think infinitely superior to any other, he meant the disposeable, such as could be employed upon foreign or offensive service should such be deemed desirable. Independent of this consideration, it was the most expeditious way in which a force to such an amount could be trained and disciplined. On such an occasion no time should be lost; they should let the militia of Ireland understand that they were willing to accept offers which involved so many advantages, and that without delay; but they might depend upon it, they would have no more offers from Ireland if they voted the amendment of the right hon. Gentleman; and upon these grounds he was decidedly hostile to that proceeding.

Sir J. Newport expressed his exultation that the loyalty and affection of the great body of the people of Ireland stood vindicated in the estimation of his Majesty's Ministers. Such was what he inferred from the declaration of one of them, and in which sentiment he trusted they all agreed; the loyal and patriotic offers of the militia, who he believed to a man would cheerfully volunteer their services, was a striking proof, to a very great extent, of the truth with which he wished to impress the House. The charge of disaffection against the great bulk of the Irish people was most groundlessly made. He trusted they would all in the hour of danger, whatever may be the differences in their religious tenets, stand

stand forth and defend the Crown and Constitution of the united realm against all attacks whatever. There were certainly some few among the very lowest orders of the people—the rabble of every country, who, bound by no ties, or influenced by no just principle, were prone to wish for changes in the Government, in the hopes of being able to gratify their own unruly passions and propensities, and so far may be held as disaffected; and such there were in Ireland in common with other countries; but with respect to the great body of the people, he repeated, his Majesty had not more true, firm, or loyal subjects in all the empire, than those of Ireland.

Col. Calcraft begged leave to offer a few observations upon the subject before the House. If he understood the nature of the case rightly, there was no necessity whatever for the hasty decision pressed by his Majesty's Ministers. He was informed, by an officer of great respectability, that the Irish Government had offers of service from some of the militia regiments so long back as four months; if this were fact, the consideration of the subject surely would admit a suspension of half a dozen days, to allow Parliament to deliberate on a principle of such importance as that involved in the address. He defended his right hon. Friend, so he hoped he might call him, from the charge of inconsistency in the opinions delivered by him. The state of Ireland at the time alluded to should be considered—a rebellion raged in the heart of the country, and we could spare no other force to resist or to suppress it then, but our militia. He had had some opportunities of knowing the state of the popular mind in Ireland, and he was not quite so sanguine as to the extinction of disaffection therein, as some Gentlemen seemed to be; and much still remained to be done, before that spirit would be obliterated. There were other objections which he entertained to a hasty decision upon the subject. He recollected on a former occasion the total want of discipline that prevailed, while the sentiments of the militia corps were ascertaining upon the point of extension of service; and he trusted, he should never again have occasion to go round canvassing his men on such a subject.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer and *Mr. Calcraft* spoke in explanation; in the course of which the latter wished the Minister, if he had any objection to lay the dates of the offers of service before the House, to state them; to which the reply was, "None in the least."

Mr.

Mr. Grenville made a few general observations on the subject and in support of the arguments advanced by his right hon. Friend (*Mr. Windham*). He would put it to Ministers, whether, if similar offers were made on the part of the militia of England, they were prepared to say, they would not propose measures for carrying them into effect, which, it would appear, in the way it seemed to be treated, they were brought to discuss by stealth.

Mr. Archdall expressed his hope, that neither Ministers nor the House would allow a question of such importance as the present to be treated of by stealth. On the contrary, he hoped it would fully and clearly meet the unanimous approbation of Parliament. The eulogium of the hon. Baronet on the loyalty of the bulk of the people of Ireland was unnecessary. Who ever doubted it? It was said that the militia service had received a blow; with respect to that of Ireland, he knew not what blow it received, but he well knew what blows it gave—it gave rebellion in that country a mortal blow; they gave repeated blows to their enemy; and he was confident they would do so again, wherever the opportunity was afforded them.

Lord De Blaquiere expressed his approbation of the address, as he deemed it highly proper at so critical a period to accept the services which had been tendered with so much loyalty; he was surprised that any hesitation should exist for a moment to accept the proffered services of so large a body of loyal men in arms. With respect to an equal offer of service on the part of the English militia, he well knew the beneficial tendency of such a proceeding. He recollected their signal services to the empire at large while employed in Ireland. To their exertions the salvation of that country was owing. Had not the regiment of Lord Buckingham and the Duke of Rutland landed so opportunely as they did, that country would no longer have appertained to Britain. He hoped the English militia would voluntarily come forward and extend their services to Ireland. But he reprobated the idea of this being done in the way of stipulation. Was the ardour of either militia clogged in such a way, it would be injurious to both countries, and an insult to one. He thought the militia of Ireland could render the greatest service to the empire at large, when employed out of Ireland, problematical as this might appear. He felt it to be the case. He felt how it must operate, when a father and two or three of his sons were perhaps fighting against

against the rest of his family. He was aware of the effect of religious prejudices, which he lamented did yet unavoidably exist. In short, he was convinced those men would be more advantageously employed any where than at their own thresholds.

Lord Folkestone made a few observations in support of what had fallen from Gentlemen on his side of the House. He particularly touched upon the fact alluded to by *Mr. Calcraft*, that some of the offers of service were made four months ago, which he considered an argument in favour of postponing the discussion; and he took occasion to deprecate the practice of suffering military bodies to deliberate.

The question being loudly called for,

Mr. Secretary Yorke said a few words in explanation, and the gallery was cleared in expectation of a division. The address, however, was carried as originally proposed, without a division; and at twelve o'clock the House adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THURSDAY, MARCH 29.

Mr. Steele reported at the bar, that his Majesty had been waited upon with the address of that House of the preceding day, which his Majesty was pleased to receive very graciously.

Sir John Newport presented a petition on behalf of *John Ogle, Esq.* complaining that *John Manners, Esq.* had been unduly returned at the last election for the borough of *Ilchester*; that by undue means a colourable majority had been obtained for the said *John Manners*, to the prejudice of the petitioner, who had the majority of legal votes, &c. Ordered to be taken into consideration on Thursday the 19th of April next.

The Secretary at War brought up the report of the Committee of Supply, which contained a resolution upon the subject of the civil list, which was read and agreed to, and the report ordered to be printed.

Mr. Sheridan called the attention of the House to the subject of the election for the borough of *Liskeard*. He delivered in a declaration on behalf of *Thomas Sheridan, Esq.* and signed by him in the form required in such case by the act of Parliament, signifying that he did not insist on the right of return made on his behalf for the above borough, and that he should not prosecute the claim under such return, &c. The natural result

sult of which was, that thirty days were to be given to the electors of this borough to prepare, if they shall be so advised, to support the return which the candidate declined, he relying on the question of merits upon the election.

It was here doubted whether the case of Mr. Thomas Sheridan, the candidate, came within the provisions of the act of Parliament; and upon it a conversation arose, which ended in an adjournment of the debate until Thursday.

LOYALTY LOAN.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* observed there was in the order book a notice, signifying the intention of an hon. Member of that House to bring forward a subject which had before been stated to him; it was a motion intended to be made on behalf of the holders of a loan, usually denominated the loyalty loan.—He must be pardoned for saying, that as he did not before hear, he now read of this notice with a considerable degree of surprise, because he did not understand it to be the wish of Gentlemen concerned on that subject to bring it forward in that shape, although it had been desired that some decision should take place upon it previous to the 5th of April. The matter was of importance, and after having considered the question upon the merits, to the best of his power, and having submitted to the Attorney and Solicitor General a statement of the case, their opinion was that the subscribers to the loan of 1796, were not under the letter, nor apparently within the equitable construction of the law made for the regulation of that subject, entitled to payment of their proportions at par, previous to the 5th of April 1805.

IRISH MILITIA.

The Secretary at War brought up the bill for empowering his Majesty for a time, and to an extent to be limited, to accept of the services of such part of the militia of Ireland as may voluntarily offer themselves to serve and to be employed in Great Britain. Read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time on Friday se'nnight, and to be printed.

The bill for the augmentation of the militia of Ireland to an extent and for a time to be limited was brought up, and read a first time. On the question for the second reading,

Mr. Dant observed that when a bill was brought in, in consequence of the apprehension of an invasion, it was proper the House should be informed by Ministers, whether in their

apprehension that event was more probable now than it was a month ago.

The *Secretary at War* reminded the hon. Gentleman that this was only a bill for providing for the augmentation of the militia force of Ireland.

Mr. Dent said, it was a bill for providing means to replace a certain military force in Ireland, which was about to be called from thence, on account of the exigencies of the present war, and, therefore, his question to the Minister was perfectly reasonable. What he wanted to know was, whether Great Britain was in more danger now of invasion than it had been a month ago; and if it was, whether Ireland was not also in as great danger as Great Britain, from the same apprehension; for unless Great Britain was in greater danger now than it had been a month ago, Ministers would not pretend that the measure was necessary. If the danger was greater now to this country than it was a month ago, but that danger was equal to Ireland as to this country, then the measure would be inefficient. He was not singular in the opinion, that the disappointment would be great indeed, unless the militia of this country made a similar offer to Ireland, as the Irish militia did to come here. This was a matter which required some explanation.

The *Secretary at War* contended, that the observations of the hon. Gentleman had no application to the bill then before the House, which was merely a bill for the augmentation of the militia of Ireland, and the hon. Gentleman had not offered any reason why that military force should not be augmented. The observations of the hon. Gentleman seemed to have been intended to apply to another bill which had been disposed of for the present, namely, the bill to empower his Majesty to accept of the services of those militias of Ireland, who shall voluntarily offer themselves for the service of this country. When that subject came again forward for discussion, it would be proper to take notice of the observations of the hon. Gentleman; at present they were not in season.

Mr. Dent said, that although in strictness this was not the bill to which his observations were applicable, yet in point of common sense, the observations were not out of season, for this bill was part of the same system as the other bill.

The *Secretary at War* moved, that the bill be read a second time on Friday se'nnight.

Mr. Kinnaird objected to that day, on account of its being the

the same as that for which the former bill stood ; and that both ought not to be discussed in one day.

The *Secretary at War* observed, that as both the bills were upon the same system, Gentlemen on the other side of the House should not object to the discussion of them upon the same day.

The bill was ordered to be read a second time on Friday se'nnight.

Mr. Calcraft moved an address to his Majesty, that he would be pleased to give directions for laying before the House a list of the regiments of the Irish militia, who had made voluntary offers of their services to be employed in any part of Great Britain during the war, specifying the date of each offer, and the number of men, &c. Ordered,

On the third reading of the Irish militia families bill,

Mr. Corry observed, for the satisfaction of Gentlemen who took an interest in this event, and in answer to the objection which had been taken to this measure, on account of the distance the objects of it were to travel to obtain their allowance, that there were three persons to which such parties had an opportunity of resorting ; the treasurer of the county, the collector of the excise, and the collector of the assessments, &c. ; so that the families of the militia of Ireland had their relief and assistance as it were at their own door.

The bill was then read a third time, and passed.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer moved that the House should at its rising adjourn to that day se'nnight. Ordered.

CAPTURES AT TOULON.

Mr. Alexander brought up the report of the Committee of Supply of the preceding day, respecting the compensation to Lord Hood, and the officers and men under his command, for the value of the ships taken at Toulon in the last war.

Mr. Calcraft observed, that Lord Hood had applied to the Lords of his Majesty's Privy Council, who seemed to think that his right was established. The Chancellor of the Exchequer too had at first spoken of the grant as a matter of right, but afterwards he thought fit to appeal to the liberality of the House. That was certainly a very noble and a generous feeling, but in such times as the present, when the country had such taxes and other burdens upon its shoulders, he did not think that it would be right in members to vote away the money of their constituents upon claims

claims of liberality only. It would not even be justice to themselves, who must in consequence bear a part of the expense; however it might suit Gentlemen who had other advantages besides their fortunes to look to. He then moved, that the report should be taken into consideration on Monday se'night, in order that there might be a more full attendance, and that Members might have an opportunity of considering the subject more minutely.

The *Advocate General* (Sir John Nicholl) observed, that he had trusted the discussion of the preceding day, would have prevented his troubling the House; that he fully agreed in the general principle of using great caution, especially at times of pressure, in granting the public money; but the present occasion appeared highly proper and just. Even as matter of legal right, he entertained a strong opinion, that Lord Hood would have been entitled to obtain the condemnation of the ships, &c. taken at Toulon. What were the facts? Lord Hood appeared off that port with a British fleet—Toulon was part of the enemy's territory. He had a right to capture, and possibly would have captured the ships in question; the inhabitants offered to surrender them conditionally. With a due regard to the public interests, he accepted the surrender: the condition was, that the ships should be held in trust for the Bourbon family, in case of its restoration, and till the end of the war. While the war continued the ships could not properly be condemned; but when a peace was made, extinguishing the hope of restoring the house of Bourbon, by recognizing the new Government, of which the inhabitants of Toulon were become subjects, the condition was at an end; the capture became absolute. Possibly the captors were, of legal right, entitled to the ships as prize; but there might be reasons of public policy for not pushing the question to a decision. Lord Hood was content to apply to the bounty of the Crown, and the liberality of Parliament. His claim was understated, in being described as an application to the liberality of the House: it appeared to be a claim upon its justice; for how did the matter stand? The ships were acquired from the enemy. All property acquired in war, in the nature of booty, belongs either to the Crown itself, or to the captors as grants of the Crown, and not to the public. These ships however had been applied to the use of the public; what then was the application? that the captors sanctioned by the Crown, in whom alone the property vested, should be paid by the public, who had

had received a valuable consideration, in that to which it had no legal right. The public was in justice, and not merely in liberality, bound to pay for these ships. In respect to the amount demanded, the application on behalf of Lord Hood, was equally moderate. The ships destroyed were not proposed to be paid for; the value of those destroyed at Aboukir and Copenhagen was given to the captors; and although the acquisition of Toulon was not to be compared to the victories of Aboukir and Copenhagen in point of splendour, yet surely it was an important public service; it gave a blow to the French marine, from which it never recovered: there was also no application for head-money; nor for interest, although the public had had the possession and use of the ships above ten years; but merely for the appraised value of the ships and stores, as they were originally converted to the public service. He concluded with saying, that he must applaud the forbearance and moderation shewn on behalf of Lord Hood, in making the application; but should not admire the liberality of the House, nor entertain a very high opinion of its justice, if it should hesitate in granting it.

Colonel Wood observed, that it was with extreme reluctance he opposed a measure which had for its object remuneration to our brave countrymen, to whom all of us are so much indebted; but the same sense of duty which induced the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer to submit the consideration of this subject to the judgment of the House, impelled him to resist the proposition as an unnecessary sacrifice of the public treasure, at a time when the most rigid economy was necessary to enable us to repel one of the most formidable attacks meditated against this country. He expressed his surprise at the arguments of the learned and hon. Gentleman (the Advocate General), who treated the ships brought away from Toulon as if a common capture, when in fact they were a sacred pledge to the British Admiral for the Royal Family of France, and however improbable their restoration may be, yet much more unexpected and more extraordinary events have happened within these few years past. With what justice therefore the country can be now called on to purchase those ships which were brought away from Toulon, from those who by neither the laws of war, of honour, or common honesty, have any right to sell, has not yet been explained. He was ready to bear ample testimony to the very meritorious services of the noble Lord, but to speak of the business of Toulon as an honest man, it was
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one from which neither the noble Admiral nor his country could ever derive much credit. From every account he had read, it appeared to be a complete surprise, otherwise every ship that was destroyed, would at this hour have added to the strength of the British navy. Whatever might be the sentiments of Gentlemen within these walls, yet many without thought that the noble Lord, in place of being rewarded for the few ships brought away, ought in justice first to pay for all those vessels which were left behind, and which, had measures of precaution been adopted in time, might undoubtedly have been secured. He begged leave to express his firm conviction, that in submitting this claim to the judgment of the House, the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer was actuated solely by a sense of public duty, and of rendering justice to a meritorious body of men, of whose merits no person thought more highly than himself.

Mr. Jones apprehended that great danger might arise from letting commanders know, that if they burned the enemy's ships they would be obliged to pay for them. He thought the achievement of that action, one of the most brilliant in the course of last war, and that it sealed the destruction of the French navy.

Mr. Sheridan declared that he really thought he saw a great deal of brilliancy in the conflagration of a number of ships, or any other large article that was capable of being burned. In no other view could he see the brilliancy of that fine achievement. The destruction of the French navy had been said to be sealed at that time, and yet he could see that it was sealed again at Aboukir in five years afterwards; and again, in two years after that, another seal was put upon it at the Helder. It was observed, that all prizes were the right of the Crown; certainly so, but of the Crown in trust for the people. Upon the whole view of the subject, he thought that Lord Hood was to blame in that transaction, and he had refused him the thanks of the House on that account. If any honour was to be claimed in the business, Sir Sidney Smith was entitled to it. The change in the opinion of Gentlemen from right to liberality reminded him of a part of a play, where Lord Koppington was applied to for some money; first it was demanded as a right, and afterwards it was asked as a favour, to which he replied—

“Then, if thou’lt take it any how, Tam, stab my vitals.”

The hon. Member then noticed, that there were in the statement of ships taken or destroyed at Toulon, 8 ships marked

marked with a little cross, thus †, which were said not to have been brought out of the harbour, or ever to have come into his Majesty's service. These ships were, however, included in the estimate. He therefore begged the Chancellor of the Exchequer to take particular notice of this circumstance, as he was sure that the paper was not his drawing up, nor indeed did it look like any act of the present Administration. He hoped also that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or some other officer of the Crown, would look at the modesty of the prayer of the petition. It prayed that his Majesty would be pleased to order that so much money should be paid by his Majesty's Advocate General. This was so unconstitutional a manner of granting public money, that he really could not think who it was that could advise such a proceeding, and that too for ships which never came into the service of the public.

The *Master of the Rolls* said, that in the practice of states, as well as the conduct of individuals, there might be demands which they were bound to comply with, although there was no positive law upon the subject; they were bound to do what they ought not to abstain from doing. From the reign of Queen Anne to the present moment the country had never derived benefit from captures without remunerating the captors. What ground was there in this instance for their breaking in upon the uniformity of proceeding in these cases? If Lord Hood could have proceeded to condemnation in the court of Admiralty, there was no occasion to come to the House, and surely it would not be contended that the House was never to be liberal except in those cases where they had no discretion. The ships in question were part of the enemy's force, and might have remained so if it had not been for the exertions of Lord Hood. Lord Hood had ulterior objects in view, and therefore abstained from exercising the strict rights of war; it thus became a qualified surrender, and this was an obstacle to proceeding in the court of Admiralty; but the prejudice to the enemy was not less. To postpone this subject, upon the suggestion, that if the old French monarchy was restored, the ships ought to be restored to that Government, might be delaying it for ever, upon the mere possibility of that Government being reinstated; but surely there must be a limit to such a condition. All the facts relating to the capture of the ships were notorious; all the papers which were necessary had been laid upon the table, and he

trusted that the claim would be acceded to, founded as it was in justice.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* observed that an hon. Member opposite (*Mr. Sheridan*) laboured under some misapprehension as to the eight ships which were mentioned in the report, but were never brought into an English harbour. The fact was, that these ships had born the English flag, and had been employed in the Mediterranean during part of the year 1793. At the time the other ships were destroyed by our fleet, these eight vessels were destroyed by the batteries of the enemy. Under these circumstances they had been included in the general account; but he thought it necessary to mention, that the whole sum charged for them was not much above seven thousand pounds. As to the application of the money, he wished the House to understand that the whole sum would not be issued in the first instance. It was meant that only such a sum should be issued as was sufficient for meeting the demands made out by principals or their relatives. The rest of the sum voted would remain in the hands of the treasury till wanted. He had only further to add, that the present measure was one solely originating with those now presiding over his Majesty's Government. As far as Lord Hood was concerned, every thing was done in the face of day; and whatever blame attached to the measure rested entirely with Ministers. He resisted any further delay as quite unnecessary.

Mr. Bankes supported the grant generally, but was against giving any allowance for the eight ships which had been referred to, or indeed for any other part of the estimates which was not fully made out to the satisfaction of the House.

Mr. Johnstone denied that Lord Hood had it in his power to have taken the French fleet at Toulon, which was got possession of solely by a capitulation with the inhabitants of the town. He did not admit that there was any thing on the part of Lord Hood which entitled him to so large a remuneration as thirty thousand pounds, particularly at a moment when our annual expenditure exceeded fifty millions. He declared that he could not, on the grounds alleged, agree to the grant which had passed the Committee.

Mr. Alexander supported the grant, on the grounds of equity, policy, and expediency.

Mr. Burroughs was in favour of the resolution; the proceedings adverted to were part of the system of warfare, and surely,
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it was not for that reason the noble Admiral should lose the right which attached to him in that capacity. On principles of public justice, he concurred with the arguments of the right hon. and learned Gentleman on the floor; it was clear in point of law, that the King's prerogative attached to such captures as those under consideration; nay, under such circumstances, the King might make a grant of them by his own authority; but Ministers coming to Parliament as they had done, were highly deserving of approbation.

Dr. Lawrence argued in support of the amendment. He at first adverted to the magnitude of the sum. He asked when it was that due reward was not given to those who merited it, in the way in which the noble Admiral did? He was ready to agree as to the King's right of granting, in such a case, by virtue of his prerogative; but the case brought before Parliament as it was, they should have some better ground to go upon than a report of the Privy Council. He claimed as a member of Parliament, that some means should be given of exercising their judgment upon that which they were called upon to grant. He could refer to every case which occurred from the reign of Queen Anne downwards. It was unnecessary to have adverted to the repeated votes of thanks by that House to the noble Lord in question. He duly appreciated his meritorious conduct on the occasion; the more so, as he, in a great degree, proceeded upon his own responsibility. The words of the Privy Council were, that some due rewards should be given; but if Parliament were to apportion those, some means should be afforded them of judging what was proper. In this instance there was certainly a claim to equitable reward, and he wished it might appear on the face of the thing. He was averse to a general sweeping grant. He objected to the present mode of proceeding, at the same time he considered this affair as by no means a personal ministerial question; neither had it any concern with the late Administration. He believed it resulted from an application to the equity of the Crown; &c. as being originally grounded in no strict legal right.

The *Attorney General* observed, that in such a case, the King, by his prerogative, might have given the ships in the first instance to the captors; but in consequence of the mode of proceeding which it was deemed proper to adopt, the value thereof was proposed to be given. Under the circumstances of this case, it was a matter of indifference, whether the possession was achieved by capture or not, as it was of that

nature that was not distributable under the prize act, so that no right vested in the captor. He knew of no instance since the reign of Queen Anne, where a liberal remuneration had not been given in such cases. In the present a number of years, 11 or 12, had elapsed since the event, and the King, in his munificence and liberality, was pleased to make a grant of the whole. All the circumstances were under the consideration of the Crown, and it was the royal decision that the whole should be granted.

The question being called for, the same was put, on which the amendment was negatived; and the resolution of the Committee of Supply, that a sum not exceeding 265,300*l.* be granted, &c. was formally ratified by the House.

Mr. Dent notified his intention to move on Monday, 5th night, for leave to bring in a bill to amend the act for raising the sum of 18 millions by way of annuity, known by the name of the loyalty loan.

The hon. Gentleman then presented a petition from certain barley growers in the county of Lincoln; which was ordered to lie on the table.

Adjourned till Thursday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

THURSDAY, APRIL 5.

The Earl of Westmeath, one of the Irish representative Peers, and Lord Grey de Howie, were sworn and took their seats.

Mr. Fowler, from the commissioners of the customs, presented an account of the balances and arrears due from the several collectors at the ports in England, on the 5th of January last, as far as the same could be made up. Ordered to lie on the table.

The bills upon the table were forwarded in their respective stages.

The order for committing the Scotch bank bill was discharged, and renewed for the next day.

The Earl of Dartmouth reported his Majesty's answer to a recent address of their Lordships, respecting the production of certain papers, the effect of which was, that his Majesty would give directions accordingly.

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VOLUNTEER REGULATIONS BILL.

The order of the day being read, for the House to resolve itself into a Committee upon this bill,

Lord Grenville observed, that with respect to a very important subject, forming a part of the present bill, and which had undergone some discussion previous to the recess, namely the prerogative of his Majesty to call out the population of the country, it was not his intention to offer any observations upon it in the Committee, as he proposed on a future day to bring in a bill upon the subject.

Their Lordships then went into a Committee upon the bill, Lord Walsingham in the chair:

The consideration of the preamble being postponed, the Committee proceeded to discuss the clauses and provisions of the bill, and several amendments were proposed by Lord Grenville. One of these related to the exemptions. The noble Lord observed, it should be clear and explicit, how far the exemptions, in certain cases, were meant to be extended. This was by no means the case, as the bill then stood; as, to qualify for these, it was necessary that returns of certain attendances at exercise, &c. should be made at three distinct periods of the year: the first of those was on or before the 1st of January in each year, and the last was on the 21st of September. How a return could be made before the 1st of January in each year, was to him inexplicable, yet so it was provided in the bill; and with respect to those volunteers who did not attend the days of exercise, &c. until after the 21st of September, as numbers of the working people could not, on account of the harvest, or other necessary occupations, great doubts obtained as the law at present stood. With a view to obviate these doubts, and to place that part of the measure under some systematic regulation, he moved an amendment to the effect, that no volunteers included in the returns made between the 1st of May 1803, and the 1st of May 1804, should be liable to any ballot which took place before the 1st of August 1804.

Lord Hawkesbury observed, that what fell from the noble Lord chiefly related to the principle of the bill, and not to any part which could regularly fall under the consideration of a Committee. The operation of the bill was for the most part prospective; its object was to repeal the existing Acts upon the subject; and to provide a system for the future regulation of the volunteer corps. He disapproved of the noble Lord's amendment.

Lord

Lord Harrowby made some observations upon what he considered as the total want of system or consistency in the conduct of Ministers with respect to the volunteer corps, and adverted to certain parts of the bill in illustration of his position.

Lord King supported what had fallen from *Lord Grenville* upon the subject.

The *Lord Chancellor* vindicated the conduct of Government upon the subject in question. The noble Lord also took occasion to vindicate the conduct of the law officers of the Crown, with respect to the opinions given, &c. and with which undue licence had been taken; he did not mean in parliamentary debates, but in pamphlets, and other modes of public discussion, where these respectable Gentlemen had not an opportunity of defending themselves. He thought this rather hard. He observed, that on the occasion alluded to, the former course of practice had been followed. They should consider the impracticability of framing an act so as to meet every possible case, and to obviate every contingent difficulty. He remarked upon the far greater facility to find fault than to amend.

Lords *Grenville* and *Harrowby* spoke in explanation, and severally disclaimed an intention in what they had said, to reflect in the slightest degree upon his Majesty's present law officers: the latter Peer professed the warmest personal friendship for the learned Attorney General.

Lord Hawkebury thought the course adopted with respect to taking the opinion of his Majesty's law officers, as to the construction of the acts, was preferable to promulgating what might be the interpretation of Ministers thereof, and much more satisfactory to individuals.

The amendment proposed by *Lord Grenville* was negatived.

On the clause which went to authorize his Majesty to accept the services of additional corps of yeomanry or volunteers, a discussion took place.

Lord Grenville contended for the impolicy, in the present circumstances of the country, of increasing the number of volunteer corps, or of the number of men to which they now actually amount. He thought, so far from entertaining an idea of increasing the number of corps, a provision should be made for incorporating smaller bodies, so as to render the force in general more susceptible of systematic regulation. Under these impressions he proposed the omission of the words in the clause which enacted as above.

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This proposition was opposed by the Earl of Westmoreland, the Lord Chancellor, Lord Hawkesbury, and other Peers.—One of the leading arguments was, the impolicy of depriving the King of the power of accepting such offers as might be made to replace those volunteers who may retire, now an unlimited power of resignation was recognised; it was not contended that the number of corps ought to be increased, and still less that the aggregate number, with a reference to the other military services of the country, should be increased beyond its present amount.

The *Lord Chancellor* particularly remarked the inconsistency of those who professed to censure Government at one time for repressing the zeal and energy of volunteers in coming forward, and now blamed Ministers for keeping them up in too great numbers. He believed there was not a single volunteer who would, in the event of invasion, take advantage of his power of resignation, but would come forward and die, if necessary, in the defence of the country.

Lord Grenville argued in defence of his proposition, and noticing what had fallen from a noble Lord (Auckland), respecting the impropriety, under the present circumstances, of rendering the country diffident of his Majesty's present Government, he said he for one strongly felt a diffidence. He had assigned his reason for such, and it was his object to inspire their Lordships also with a similar diffidence.

Lord Hobart, in remarking upon the noble Lord's confident assertions of the difficulties thrown in the way of the volunteer system, observed, that did such clogs and difficulties exist, the numbers could never have swelled to their present amount.

The *Duke of Montrose* differed from the noble Lord (Grenville) in many of his positions, and seemed to think the power should be given, when the liberty of resignation was considered, to his Majesty to accept the future offers of service by volunteers.

The question was then put, and the clause ordered to stand in its original form.

One or two other amendments proposed by Lord Grenville were also negatived.

On the clause relative to the exemptions from compulsory service, a discussion took place.

Lord Grenville viewed the substance of that clause as a measure of partiality, from the very obvious nature of its tendency,

tendency, and as a measure which was framed on principles directly opposite to those principles of freedom and equal distribution of justice which are the pride and glory of a British constitution. His Lordship concluded by moving an amendment, in substance purporting that those whose services shall be hereafter accepted of shall not be entitled to exemption.

Lord Hawksworth stated, that the exemptions were regulated in the most equal manner possible. Exemptions had been granted to some persons by the Legislature, under a former act. He submitted to their Lordships if it was not just that the service of those, whose offer was not only co-extensive but in some instances more extended, should be considered as fairly entitled to the privileges or immunities which had been granted by the former act?

Lord Harrowby called to their Lordships' attention the probability of several having entered into volunteer corps with other views than that of defending their country against a threatened invasion. The minds of men were not altogether so pure that we could fairly suppose that when they found themselves threatened with a very severe service, they would not, in many instances, endeavour to commute it for a lighter and an easier service.

The *Earl of Westmoreland* declared that he thought it would be impossible to frame a measure of this description without being liable to some objection. The invasion which was now impending, or supposed to be so, could not with propriety be reckoned more alarming than any former state of the country, taking in all the circumstances of the case, though that was a point which was too generally dwelt upon. Last war we had sedition at home in Great Britain, rebellion in Ireland, and an enemy constantly on the watch to assist the disaffected, and promote the extension of their plans.

Lords Darnley, Carnarvon and King, supported the amendment, and urged the impropriety of the clause in its present form.

Lord Bolton allowed the inequality of the operation of the exemptions in some cases, but stated that the prerogative of the Crown should be exercised in a liberal and extended view in time of danger.

Lord Grenville declared, that there was no such principle admitted in the British constitution, as that of the Crown having a right to select any one class of its subjects for exemption, and point out others for military duty; it was ~~ad-~~
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horrent to the very foundation of a free constitution. But it appeared to him, that his Majesty's Ministers had no fixed plan or sentiment by which to regulate their conduct. A variety of instances were to be adduced if necessary; for the present, however, he should content himself with noticing one instance of their inconsistency: last February circular letters were sent to the different Lord Lieutenants of counties, desiring them to expedite the levy for the army of reserve as much as possible, and yet now they wished to suspend the operation of the act by which that force is to be raised. In such persons he could place no confidence, and in such hands was this bill brought forward with so many inconsistencies and contradictions.

After a few observations from Lord Hawkesbury, Lord Winchelsea, and Earl Romney, their Lordships divided. The numbers were,

For the original clause	41
For the amendment	11

Majority 30

The Committee then reported progress, and had leave to sit again the next day.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THURSDAY, APRIL 5.

Mr. Dickens, from the Secretary of State's office for Ireland, presented an account of the exports and imports, in pursuance of a previous order of the House.

A message from the Lords announced their concurrence with the innkeepers' allowance bill, and several other public and private bills that had passed the House previously to the recess.

Mr. Creevey moved, that the order of the day of the 17th instant, for taking into consideration the petition against the election for the county of Stirling, be read, in order to its being discharged. The order having been read and discharged accordingly,

Mr. Creevey moved, that the petition be taken into consideration on Tuesday the 1st of May; which was agreed to.

Mr. Secretary Yorke, in pursuance of a former order of the House, brought up lists of such militia corps in Ireland as had volunteered their services to Great Britain, which

were ordered to lie on the table, and to be printed for the use of the Members.

Certain accounts relating to the armed shipping of the country were laid before the House, and ordered to be printed.

Mr. Vanfittart moved for the production of the accounts of the outstanding Exchequer bills of last year, which were accordingly ordered.

Mr. Corry brought in a bill to amend the existing laws for the better regulation of the linen manufactory in Ireland, which was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time the next day, and to be printed.

Lord Castlecragh, in pursuance of a previous order of the House, brought up a copy of the correspondence that had taken place between the Government of India, and the King of Candy, in relation to the causes of the present war, which was ordered to be printed.

Mr. Purdue presented certain accounts from the Excise office, which were ordered to lie on the table.

The Dublin police bill was read a second time and committed.

LISKEARD ELECTION.

Mr. Sheridan moved, that the order of the day for resuming the adjourned debate on the election at Liskeard be read, which having been read accordingly,

The *Speaker* recalled the attention of the House to the situation of the debate on the day of its adjournment. The original motion was that the order of the day for taking into consideration the petition of Mr. Huskisson on the 9th inst. be read in order to be discharged.

The question therefore having been put that the said order be discharged,

Mr. Burroughs opposed the discharge of the order. He animadverted particularly on the inconsistency of Mr. Sheridan opposing, in the first instance, the legality of the return, and on the next day objecting to the legality of the election. He contended, that the petition of Mr. Huskisson did not complain of a double return but of the inconvenience of being prevented from taking his seat, by means of a schedule annexed to the indenture of his election, purporting to be a return, but which in fact was nothing, as it had not been legally signed by the returning officer. He laid the more stress upon this, as neither of the petitions denied the mayor to be the legal returning officer. The question to be tried by the Committee, the hon. Gentleman thought, was quite competent to the House, as Mr. Sheridan

Sheridan had given up the double return, and concluded by urging, that there was no reason whatever for discharging the order in question.

The *Secretary at War* stated that he had formerly moved the adjournment, in order that Members, as there existed some difficulty in regard to the rules of the House on the subject, might have time to make up their minds, and to ascertain the usual practice of the House in such cases. The hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, he thought, had gone much farther than he ought, as the decision of the House on a former day, in referring the question of return to a Committee, had completely superseded every opinion in that respect. But the petition of Mr. Huskisson, he contended, did complain of a double return, or a false return, which to all intents and purposes was the same thing, so far as the proceedings of the House were concerned, and which equally required the appointment of a Committee. He argued farther, that Mr. Sheridan might withdraw his petition against the return, and support, notwithstanding, the rights of his election. The right hon. Gentleman concluded by supporting the motion.

Mr. Henderson could not be convinced, notwithstanding all that had been said, that the return in question was a double return; not a single allegation even in Mr. Sheridan's petition went to make a double return of such a nature as required the interference of the Grenville act. He argued that the conduct of the Sheriff was highly culpable, and adduced several cases to show that the House ought not to be deprived of the presence of Members, either from caprice in the electors or obstinacy in a disappointed candidate. He argued that no return was good, unless signed by the returning officer; but the return in question was not only not signed, but was positively refused to be signed by the mayor, who was allowed on all hands to be the returning officer.

Mr. Sheridan replied to the objections that had been offered. He maintained that Mr. Huskisson's petition did complain of a double return, and turned over to the words which he apprehended must admit of that construction. At any rate the double return had been already recognised by the House, inasmuch as they had sent it to a Committee. So far was the conduct of the Sheriff not to be condemned, that measures were now taking against the mayor, on account of his obstinacy in refusing to sign the return in question. The double return, however, was not the shape

in which they wished the business to go to the Committee. They wished the right only to be considered, being certain that in that respect they must have a very decided superiority.

Mr. Wm. Dundas opposed the motion from the inconvenience of keeping the House empty by such measures, and defeating the legal representation of the country. He would appeal to both parties if the schedule in question was not a paper which they could both wish had never existed; but as he already perceived the inclinations of the House, he was unwilling to trespass on their time.

The question was then put and carried, that the order should be discharged.

And on the motion of *Mr. Sheridan*, the said petition was ordered to be taken into consideration on the 3d of May next, the day appointed for the consideration of *Mr. T. Sheridan's* petition.

Mr. Burroughs then moved, according to a standing order of the House, that the petition of *Mr. Huskisson* be heard first, as they were now both fixed for the same day.

The *Speaker* begged leave to remind the hon. Gentleman that the standing order of the House, to which he had alluded, applied only to the conduct of Committees in regard to the priority in question.

Mr. Cocks moved that the order for the consideration of the right be now read, in order that it might be postponed to the same day fixed for the petitions. His reason was, that the parties who would be in consequence of this business brought up to London, might not be detained longer than was absolutely necessary.

The *Secretary at War* observed, that, if the question of right was once ascertained, the other two questions would follow of course, and would therefore save the trouble of any further attendance of witnesses.

Mr. Sheridan did not think that any witnesses that might be brought up would refuse their further attendance.

Mr. Cocks then stated that, on account of the thinness of the House, he was willing to withdraw his motion, and gave notice that he would bring it forward again the next day.

Mr. Sheridan preferred another petition respecting the *Liskeard* election, which was ordered to be taken into consideration with the others formerly presented on the 3d of May next.

Adjourned.

HOUSE

HOUSE OF LORDS.

FRIDAY, APRIL 6.

The Committee upon the Irish priests' and deacons' bill, which stood for this day, was, on the suggestion of the Bishop of St. Asaph, postponed till Thursday.

On the motion of Lord Auckland, certain accounts respecting the capital, &c. of the Scotch bank were ordered to be laid before the House. These were moved for, his Lordship observed, from no inclination on his part to oppose the measure, but from the accounts moved for being necessary, as he understood, for the due illustration of the subject.

The bankers' bill, and the Irish militia families' provision bill, were brought up from the Commons, and read a first time.

On the motion of the Bishop of St. Asaph, all the Lords present during this session were ordered to be Members of the Committee on the St. Pancras poor bill.

VOLUNTEER REGULATIONS BILL.

The order of the day being read, the House resolved into a Committee on this bill, Lord Walsingham in the chair.

The discussion of the fourth clause was resumed. By this it is enacted, that every person enrolled, or to be enrolled, or serving as an effective member in any corps of yeomanry or volunteers in Great Britain, and who shall be duly returned or certified as such, shall be exempted from being liable to serve personally, or to provide a substitute in the militia of Great Britain, or in any additional force raised, or to be raised, for the defence of the realm, or the more vigorous prosecution of the war, by any act passed in this session, &c.

Earl Spencer having referred to this part of the clause, moved to amend the same by the addition of the words, "or any subsequent session of Parliament."

This proposition gave rise to a discussion in which Lords Spencer, Grenville, the Lord Chancellor, Lords Ellenborough, Auckland, Carnarvon, and the Duke of Montrose, took a part.

It was contended on the part of those peers who supported the amendment, as Lords Grenville, Spencer, Carnarvon, &c. that the principle of exemption having been recognized in, and provided for by the bill, it should consistently with parliamentary faith and honour, on which the volunteer relied on tendering his services, be extended in

in the way proposed by the amendment: the case was similar to that of the public creditor, who relied on a continued and unaltered parliamentary sanction, as a security for the interest of his money; and it was preferable that the exemptions, such as contended for, should stand on the statutes and rolls of Parliament, as the best security to the volunteer, and not to suffer these regulations to be dependent on the feelings or future opinions of individuals.

It was contended by Lord Hawkesbury, the Lord Chancellor, and the other Ministerial Peers, that under all the circumstances of the case, it was preferable to let the clause remain as it stood: the clause had a two-fold operation, and applied to corps, &c. to be raised hereafter as well as to those now in existence. The amendment of the noble Earl would not therefore meet the object proposed; the impolicy of tying up the hands of the Legislature in certain cases was contended for: the honour and good faith of Parliament were, however, to be kept inviolate, and these were considerations which must have their due effect on the Legislature, when considering of acts hereafter on the subject, should such proceedings be necessary.

At length the amendment was pushed to a division, when there appeared

Contents 14—Non-contents 34.—Majority against the addition 20.

Lord Grenville then proposed, that the words excepting from the exemptions under the act such corps as in their offers of service had waived that privilege, should be omitted.

The Duke of Montrose, Lords Grenville, Carnarvon, King, Bolton, &c. supported the amendment, and contended that there was the grossest injustice and absurdity in allowing exemptions, as the act did, to *new* corps to be accepted of, and yet denying them to those who had honourably stepped forward without any motive but patriotism. Exemptions were to be allowed to such additional corps as his Majesty might accept of. He might refuse their offer of service, but, if he did accept of them, he must grant them the exemptions.

The Lord Chancellor, Lords Hawkesbury and Hobart, argued in favour of the original clause. They maintained that by the introduction of a word or two, excepting not only the corps who had already waived their exemptions, but those who *might offer* under that condition, one half of the objection would be done away. The other half they thought

thought might easily be got the better of in consequence of that understanding which must be supposed to prevail between his Majesty and the corps already enrolled under the condition of waving their exemptions. They might, if they thought proper, signify their disinclination to continue their services under their former offers; and his Majesty would naturally see the propriety of re-embodiment without any such restriction.

On this amendment the House divided,

For the original clause, Contents 34—Non-contents 14—Majority against the amendment 20.

Lord Grenville then moved an amendment on the next clause, the spirit of which was, that such volunteers as should hereafter be accepted, in addition to the present establishment, should not be entitled to any of the exemptions. In supporting the amendment, his Lordship professed himself hostile to the extension of exemptions, and at the same time against carrying the volunteer system beyond its present establishment.

Lord Hobart could not help thinking, that such amendments could have no other tendency than to lose the time of the House, as should they even be carried, they would effect no material alteration in the system. He regretted the loss of the support of the noble Lord, which must certainly be an acquisition to any Administration; but the only answer that could be made to every thing that might be said in opposition to the bill was, the efficient force actually existing, that had been raised by the measures adopted by his Majesty's Government. In this respect, he would trust for approbation to the candour of the majority of the House.

Lord King was of opinion that, whatever trust his Majesty's Ministers might repose in the candour of the majority of the House, they did not possess the confidence of the country. Nothing, he thought, would give greater pleasure to the country at large than their dismissal. The most brilliant victory could not be more welcome at the present crisis than such news; while nothing, he was certain, could be more severely felt by the enemies of the country, who received additional strength in proportion to their weakness.

Lord Hawkebury replied with considerable warmth. It was the duty of the House, if they thought Ministers ill-qualified for their situation, to present an address to his Majesty for their dismissal; but so long as they were thought worthy

worthy to continue in office, it was the duty of the House to support them, and to allow them that degree of confidence which was absolutely necessary to carry into effect measures for the public safety. He adverted pretty largely to the former Administration. They in general had supported their measures by pleading that the times were new, and the exigencies of the country imperiously urgent: but the present times were certainly not less new, nor the present exigencies of the country less urgent. The measures relating to the volunteer system, had been brought forward originally from the spur of the moment, and, like other hurried measures, could not be expected to be all at once perfect. But all things considered, the Government certainly deserved credit for what they had done, and was entitled to the approbation of the country for having done so much.

The *Duke of Montrose* complained, that so far as he was officially concerned in regard to the volunteers, he had been puzzled and perplexed with the different measures that Government had adopted, and had found it repeatedly necessary, even to a troublesome degree, to apply by letter to the Secretary at War for advice and information, while he was no less distressed by writing letters in a similar manner for the information of others. The noble Duke was for the amendment, and thought many alterations necessary to amend the system.

Lord Harcourt supported the amendment, and dwelt particularly on the incongruities of the system.

Lord Carnarvon contended for the amendment, and made several reflections on the incapacity of Ministers, who did not possess, he thought, the confidence of the country.

The *Lord Chancellor* thought no noble Lord, whatever he might state as his own opinion, had a right to announce in that House the supposed sentiments of the country. The noble Lord who had just sat down, or any other noble Lord, might withdraw his confidence from his Majesty's Government; but it was certainly not parliamentary in any noble Lord to constitute himself the organ of the public, and to declare as a fact, what he might only conceive to be the opinion of the country. Allegations of this nature were unconstitutional. The noble Lord deprecated the language held that night, in regard to the incapacity of his Majesty's Ministers; and which was too common, both in that House, and out of doors. For his own part he was willing to leave his place; should the House point out any set of men who would

would more effectually or more sincerely study the public welfare. He would retire from every emolument of office, with a temper too ardent perhaps at times, but with a temper which had been broken down and subdued by a course of public service. He thought, however, that before noble Lords were loud in decrying his Majesty's present Government, they ought to point out men that would be better qualified for the task assigned them, and then proceed in a regular manner by an address to his Majesty.

Lord Grenville said, he had never insinuated that the present Ministry were actuated by any bad motives, because he was ready to give them full credit for the purity of their intentions; but he contended that at such a crisis as the present, other qualities besides good intentions were necessary for the Ministers of this country, which was now for the first time fighting for its existence; and he really and conscientiously believed that his Majesty's present Ministers did not possess talents equal to the government of the country at such an arduous crisis.

The amendment was negatived.

Lord Darnley then moved, as an amendment, that no volunteer corps should be entitled to exemptions who had not offered to serve in any part of Great Britain in case of invasion. This was opposed by *Lords Romney, Winchelsea, and Egremont*, who contended that it would be a breach of faith to the volunteers to narrow the exemptions under which they had been embodied.

Lord Darnley then consented to withdraw his amendment, for the purpose of introducing another, the effect of which was to deprive all volunteers of exemptions who had not offered to serve in the military district to which they belonged. This amendment was opposed upon the same grounds as the former, and after some consideration, the noble Lord was induced to withdraw it.

The clause was then agreed to, and the House being resumed, the Committee was ordered to sit again on Monday, to which day the House adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

FRIDAY, APRIL 6.

The right hon. Lord John Campbell (son of the Duke of Argyll) took the oaths and his seat as representative for Argyllshire, in Scotland.

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Accounts

Accounts of the amount of the imports and exports of Great Britain, of the permanent taxes, and several other documents relative to the revenue for the year beginning on the 5th of January 1803, and ending at the same period in the present year, were ordered to be laid before the House.

Mr. Secretary Yorke presented lists of the Irish militia regiments and their officers, who have voted to extend their services to Great Britain. Ordered to be printed.

The right hon. Member also presented accounts of the expences incurred in the fulfilling of the 7th article of the convention with the United States of America. Ordered to lie on the table.

Accounts of the different Exchequer bills which have been issued within the year, were also presented by the right hon. Gentleman; and ordered to lie on the table.

Mr. Somers Cocks moved, that the order of the day for taking into further consideration the Liskeard election petitions be read. He did this, he observed, with a view that the order might be so fixed as that the witnesses, who were to attend at the investigation of the two questions respecting that election, should not be at the expence and loss of time of either waiting a long while in town, or else having two journeys from Cornwall to London.

After a conversation respecting the propriety of fixing the time for hearing each petition, the petitions were ordered to be taken into consideration on Thursday, the 3d of May next.

Lord A. Hamilton named Thursday next, as the day on which he should bring forward his motion respecting the payment of officers on the Irish establishment at par.

MAHRATTA WAR.

Mr. Francis expressed a hope that a noble Lord opposite to him (Lord Castlereagh) would give some information to the House, respecting the origin or cause of the great and important transactions which had lately taken place in India. At such a crisis as the present, it was far from being his intention to make any observations, or to press for a disclosure of any transactions, which could in the least tend to embarrass his Majesty's Ministers in the conducting of any branch of the public business. It was well known, however, that General Wellesley's army was in motion early in August. Such a great operation as the march of that

that army, must have been determined in council long before that period; there must have been many letters or other documents on the subject, which were sent to and from various persons and places, before the council came to the determination of sending our troops on that service which we now were informed they had accomplished with so much bravery. He would be glad to know, whether his Majesty's Ministers had advised the plan and project of the war previous to the Governor General and Council having determined on the marching of the troops. The hon. Member concluded with moving, "that there be laid before the House, copies or extracts of the letters or dispatches which have passed to or from the Governor General at Bengal, or the Governor of Fort St. George, relative to the Mahratta war, as far as they can be at present made out, together with the dates of all such documents."

Lord Castlereagh declared his sincere wish to afford every satisfaction in his power to the hon. Member and the House, respecting the transactions to which he alluded. At present, however, the same reasons existed which he had assigned on a former occasion for the non-production of the papers which the hon. Member wished for: As soon as those accounts arrived which he had said formerly were wanting to complete the whole, he should think it his duty to lay them before the House. There were no accounts from Bengal of a later date than the 26th of June as yet received by his Majesty's Ministers. When all the statements should arrive complete, he would have no objection to enter into a discussion of the merits of the whole of the case. In the present state of affairs, however, he could not think it fair with respect to the character of the Governor General, a person for whom he was satisfied every Member in the House must entertain the highest respect—he could not think it equitable or right on his account to enter into a partial investigation of so important a transaction as that to which the hon. Member alluded must be acknowledged to be. There was nothing at present in the hands of Government which could be sufficient grounds for determining the merits of the war.

Mr. Johnstone expressed some astonishment at understanding from the noble Lord, that Ministers had not as yet received any account of the commencement of a business, though a great part of its progress was universally known throughout the empire. He then argued that, from the position of General Lake, the intelligence of anterior date

which was required, should have also now arrived. The hon. Member then pointed out three different opportunities at which the accounts might have been sent after the hostilities had commenced. The act of Parliament is in this case peremptory, and orders that the Governor-General shall send his dispatches by the quickest conveyance possible. He did not mean to impeach the character of the Governor-General in the slightest degree, but surely, when so many opportunities of sending the information were known of, and when the magnitude of the subject was considered, it was becoming the dignity of Parliament that it should have some official information on the subject. The noble Lord, perhaps, would accede to a plan which had been acted upon at a former period, namely, to lay the documents before the House as far as they go. They would then most probably be printed, and Members would be in possession of so much of the facts by the time the other papers would arrive. If taken all together, they would, in all probability, be so voluminous, that it would be impossible to bring the matter under discussion in the course of the present session.

Lord Castlereagh assured the hon. Members and the House, that Government were only in possession of the correspondence which took place between General Wellesley and Scindea. Other documents were absolutely requisite for the purpose of a complete investigation of the subject. The noble Lord again appealed to the candour of the Members and the House, as to the unfair impression which a partial inquiry might occasion, with respect to the conduct of the Governor General.

Mr. Francis disclaimed any idea of prejudging, or partially deciding on the conduct of any man. But Parliament ought to be informed of every particular respecting so important a transaction, lest its honour should suffer from not making the inquiry; it could not be supposed to be quite senseless in such important circumstances. At a time when the House was told that Government were in almost daily expectation of having an enemy to contend with on British ground, he could not bear to hear of money being squandered at Delhi and the Malabar Coast, without making some inquiry as to what was the occasion of such a war, what differences gave rise to it, or how far justice might appear to be on the side of the British or of the enemy, though as an Englishman he must always hope to find his country in the right.

right. In consequence of the observation of the noble Lord, he should, however, consent to withdraw his motion.

Mr. Dent said that, from certain circumstances that had come to his knowledge since he had given his last notice respecting the holders of loyalty loan, he should now move to postpone the notice on that subject, which stood for Monday next, until the Monday following.—Ordered.

IRISH MILITIA.

Mr. Secretary Yorke moved the second reading of the Irish militia offers bill.

Sir William Elford rose in this early stage of the business to oppose the measure, which he did from a conviction that the most pernicious consequences would follow, and from feeling that no ground or argument whatever had been offered in support of it, which could warrant such a departure from the constitutional principles on which the militia was established: When the right hon. Secretary proposed this measure, he understood him to have stated that by accepting the voluntary services of any given number, suppose for instance ten thousand, of the Irish militia to serve in Great Britain, a corresponding number of the disposable force now here might be liberated for foreign service; a datum must be here assumed therefore, that there were now in Ireland 10,000 men more than the defence of that part of the united kingdom required. If that number of men therefore could be taken from the defence of Ireland, why were they not at once taken from the regular army there, instead of doing it in the circuitous way proposed, and thus giving a stab to the militia service? It was, he supposed, to be answered, that there were not too many men now in Ireland for its defence; but that the militia was immediately to be increased in that part of the united kingdom: but surely no man would contend, that a new levy of militia could be ballotted, trained, and disciplined so as to replace those that might be withdrawn from Ireland, in time to meet the danger which Ministers told us we were daily and hourly to expect. The only ground besides what was before stated on which this proposition was rested, appeared to be that it was a mere repetition of the measure which was adopted in the last war, where the services of the British militia in Ireland were accepted by Government. Now, he said, nothing could be more dissimilar than these two events, which were thus intended to be confounded; he felt the delicacy of drawing the contrast, but he trusted those hon.

hon. Members who were connected with that part of the united kingdom, and those especially connected with the militia, would do him the justice to believe he did not state the difference of the two cases from any invidious motives, but for the sake of the argument that arose out of them; and he had the less scruple on this occasion, because that gallant body of men, the Irish militia, wanted no adventitious praises; they wanted not their characters to be propped up by merit to which they were not entitled: their conduct in the last war was such as to have rendered the most essential services to their country, and to have gained a lasting honour to themselves; but he would not insult the common sense of that respectable body of men, or of the House, by saying or pretending to think that there was any kind of similarity whatever between the circumstances under which the British militia volunteered their services for Ireland, and those of Ireland had offered to serve in this part of the united kingdom. When the former event took place, Ireland was in a state of insurrection and rebellion, the seeds of which were so widely disseminated, that where they had not appeared they were expected to spring up every moment. The enemy were actually landed in the country, and no disposable force adequate to the emergency could be found here. These were the circumstances under which the British militia volunteered their services; and although he was as ready as any one to allow that a severe blow was then given to that establishment, yet he should ever be of opinion that the Administration on a due consideration and balance of the evil, and the benefits to be derived from the measure, had acted wisely in advising his Majesty to apply to Parliament for power to accept their offer. The event of it was important, and he believed, decisive, not so much from the effect of the mere physical force of those who went thither, which was however considerable, as in another point of view, which he had once before had an occasion to state to the House, and which he now repeated, which was, that the Irish rebels had been persuaded that persons of their own class in this country were ready to abet and assist their views whenever an opportunity should offer, and this opinion was so firmly rooted in their minds, that no reasoning or arguments could eradicate it; but when they saw those very persons from whom they had been taught to expect co-operation, volunteering their services against them, the hopes they had so long entertained were effectually crushed; and he believed in his conscience this circumstance tended more

to put down the rebellion than any other event that happened during the whole progress of it. But what was the case at present? did any rebellion exist here? was this country more likely to be invaded than Ireland?—what then was the foundation of this measure in the present instance? He was aware that he and others who opposed the present, and who had voted for the former measure, would be accused of inconsistency, not because there was any inconsistency in their conduct, but because he could not expect better treatment in that respect than a right honourable and more respectable Member not now in his place, who on a former night had been so accused, and certainly on pretensions equally unfounded. A man might with the most perfect consistency vote for the same measure at one time which he might oppose on another, because times and circumstances must always be taken into the account, and must constitute the motives of action. On the former occasion it was the extreme urgency and necessity of the case that warranted the measure, and that excused such a departure from the constitutional principle of the militia establishment; no such necessity could now be maintained, and it was on those grounds he opposed it. He said, when he saw a very strong proposition supported by very weak arguments, he could not help thinking that the whole case had not been stated, that there was some cause unavowed, and he owned he suspected that cause to consist in an intention on the part of Ministers to excite the offers of the British militia again to go to Ireland. If that was the view of his Majesty's Ministers, let them avow it; we should then know what we were about; but at present they were endeavouring to effect that, and by the worst of all possible means, by putting military bodies into a state of deliberation, which necessarily tended to insubordination, and a thousand other evils, which those who had seen the progress of volunteering on former occasions were fully apprized of; and he understood that some British regiments had already offered their services for Ireland, and that one had already done so without the knowledge or consent of their officers. If the view of Government was this interchange of the militia of the two parts of the united kingdom, let them manfully profess it, and propose to do it in a direct manner; and if it was to be effected, the evil of the present means would be done away. He owned, however, that he thought the principle not good, and for this reason, among others, the militia service, it ought

ought to be remembered, was not a profession, but a temporary occupation. It was of the utmost importance that persons of the first character and respectability should be engaged in it, and therefore it ought in common sense to be rendered as little incompatible with their other engagements and avocations as possible. Now, he knew that it was the opinion of a most able statesman, that it would be a wise regulation for militia regiments never to be marched to any considerable distance from their respective counties, except in cases of emergency, to which when it occurred all would cheerfully submit; and this principle, therefore, if it was a good one, which he most heartily subscribed to, formed a strong argument against such an arrangement as he had before adverted to. He said that he had thought it his duty thus shortly to state his opinion in this early stage of the business. He did not mean then to offer any amendment, such as that the further progress of the measure should be put off for six months; although he should be glad that a proposition might at a future period be made by some one of more consideration than himself. He would only now add, that he should think it his duty to oppose the measure in every future stage of the proceeding, from a thorough conviction, that even if the end of Government in an interchange of the militia was a wise one, which he was not prepared to admit, it could not be effected by means more pernicious than those proposed.

Mr. Banks stated that his sentiments with respect to this measure had undergone no alteration since he had last the honour of addressing the House, although from the thinness of the House upon the present occasion, he should not enter into the subject at any length, but would reserve himself for a future opportunity.

Colonel Balford entirely coincided with the hon. Member who had just sat down, as to the nature and tendency of the bill before the House.

The motion was agreed to, and the bill ordered to be committed for Tuesday.

The Irish militia augmentation bill was also read a second time and committed for Tuesday.

Ordered, on the motion of *Mr. Corry*, that the House should on Monday next, resolve itself into a Committee to consider of making provision to enable the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland to augment the militia of that country.

On the motion for the second reading of the Irish flax seed bill,

bill, a conversation took place between Colonel Hutchinson and Mr. Corry, upon a question from the former, as to the tendency which this bill would have to affect the oil manufactory in Ireland. It appeared that such flax seed as shall be found upon importation to be damaged, and unfit for the growers to use, is to be warehoused for a certain time; unless the merchants can in the interim procure oil manufacturers to purchase it; and also give security that such seed shall not be planted. This security is meant for the interest of the linen manufacture.

The Committees of Supply and Ways and Means were postponed till Monday, to which day the House adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

MONDAY, APRIL 9.

The several bills before the House were forwarded in their respective stages.

Mr. Mansfield, from the Scotch bank company, presented certain accounts relative to the capital, &c. of that corporation, which were ordered to lie upon the table.

On the motion of Lord Auckland, Mr. Wyatt was ordered to attend the Committee of their Lordships, to whom it was referred to consider of the best mode of improving the lighting of, and avenues to the House, &c.

The *Earl of Suffolk* observed, that as he could not in the stage the volunteer bill was then in before their Lordships, regularly deliver his sentiments upon the principle of that measure, a consideration which he conceived of extreme importance, he should, the next day, bring forward a motion upon a subject of the highest importance, and closely connected with the measure alluded to, he meant the general defence of the country. The noble Earl then moved that their Lordships be summoned for the next day; which was ordered accordingly.

VOLUNTEER REGULATIONS BILL.

Lord Hawkesbury moved the order of the day for the House to resolve into a Committee upon this bill; and accordingly Lord Walsingham took the chair.

Their Lordships proceeded to the consideration of the eighth clause; and on a suggestion of Earl Spencer, that an annual return should be made, instead of causing it to be

made at three distinct periods, it was remarked by Lord Hawkesbury, that the more frequent return would be the more preferable, and for the obvious reason that Government should know, as often as it could, without giving unreasonable trouble to those concerned, what number of effective volunteer forces it had to depend upon.

The consideration of administering the oath of allegiance, &c. to volunteers, occasioned some diversity of opinion upon the point; and the Earl of Chesterfield took the opportunity to state the mode adopted by him at his residence in Derbyshire, in which quarter he had administered the oath in between two and three thousand volunteers, not one of whom considered its being tendered previous to their signing the roll, as the slightest reflection upon them.

A few amendments were made in one or two of the subsequent clauses.

Lord Hawkesbury signified his intention of moving to substitute the "first day of June," for the first day of May, as the period for the commencement of the bill.

In the eleventh clause of the bill an amendment was proposed by Lord Grenville, for the introduction, after the words "deliver, or cause to be delivered to any surveyor or inspector of taxes of the district wherein such corps shall be enrolled, or," of words to this effect—"in case there shall be no such surveyor or inspector of taxes then to surveyor, &c. of any adjoining district."

On this the sense of the Committee was taken; when there appeared

For the amendment	-	-	16
Against it	-	-	34
			<hr/>
Majority	-	-	18

On the next provision which respects the certificates to be delivered by commanding officers of yeomanry cavalry, &c. of the number of horses and the names of the providers of the same, an amendment was proposed by Lord Grenville to the general effect of preventing such provision from being unnecessarily troublesome to the commanding officers. On this some discussion took place, which was terminated also by a division:

For the amendment	-	-	15
Against it	-	-	31
			<hr/>
Majority	-	-	16

The

The clause relating to volunteers being liable to the ballot for the militia, and on quitting their respective corps, to serve or find substitutes, was amended by directing a notice to be given them, that they were exempted from serving so long as they continued effective members of such corps; and a provision was also added, that they should only be liable to serve during the present war, and until six months after the ratification of a definitive treaty of peace.

On the provision relative to the manner in which former exemptions attached to persons quitting volunteer corps, considerable difference of opinion arose between Lord Grenville and the Lord Chancellor, relative to the meaning of the words, which ended in adjourning the consideration of it till the next day.

The Committee then reported progress, and had leave to sit again the next day.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, APRIL 9.

Mr. John Latouche brought up a petition from the prisoners confined for debt in the prison for the county of the city of Dublin, stating the hardships under which they labour, and praying relief. Ordered to be laid on the table.

He brought up another of a similar kind from the prisoners confined for debt in the Marshalsea prison of Dublin, which was also ordered to be laid on the table.

Sir John Newport gave notice, that he should on Wednesday next move to postpone the consideration of the subject of the Ilchester Committee from the 17th of this month, until the 8th of May next.

Mr. Corry gave notice, that he should the next day propose for the consideration of the House a measure respecting the present circulating coin of Ireland.

Mr. Foster asked what was the right hon. Gentleman's intention. He took it for granted it related to the silver coin.

Mr. Corry begged leave to decline entering more particularly into the subject at that time.

Mr. Serjeant Best presented a petition on behalf of the company of proprietors of the Swansea canal navigation, against a bill now depending before the House. Ordered to be laid on the table.

Mr. H. Addington moved, that the order of the day for taking

taking into consideration the report on the cotton weavers' petition be postponed to Thursday next. Ordered.

Mr. Corry moved the order of the day for going into a Committee of the whole House, to consider of making provision for augmenting the Irish militia; which being read,

Mr. Corry said, that before he moved that the Speaker do leave the chair, he should state the nature of the measure to be proposed, the augmentation of the Irish militia, and if Parliament should think fit that it should take place, money must be advanced out of the Exchequer of Ireland, to be afterwards repaid by the treasurers of the counties; for this it would be necessary to introduce a clause into the bill, and there must be a resolution by a Committee of the whole House for the purpose: that should be reported on a subsequent day, and an instruction must afterwards be given to the Committee on the bill, that they may have power to insert it in such bill.

Mr. Calcraft doubted the regularity of moving any certain sum for a certain service, before Parliament had voted that service. He thought it extraordinary that the sum of money should be voted for a thing, before that thing itself was voted. If there was any absolute necessity for it, or that it could not be done at any other time, he should be ready to give way, and offer no opposition to it; but he should think it would be much more regular for Parliament to grant the thing itself before it granted the means of supporting it.

Mr. Secretary York said, that the thing now proposed was more matter of course, in order to enable the House to proceed in the Committee the next day, on the subject of the Irish militia, for until there was a vote of a Committee of the whole House to advance this money out of the Irish Exchequer, no provision could be made to enable the Lord Lieutenant to go into the measure. This was merely matter of form; for if the House should not adopt the bill, the vote now about to be proposed would fall to the ground; the report could not be received until the next day, and without this vote it would be impossible to proceed upon the bill; and he submitted, that as there were two bills before the House upon this subject, whether it might not be better that they should both come on together.

Mr. Caterst thought one of them sufficient for the discussion of one day, but he was satisfied with the reason given for the vote which was about to be proposed, and therefore should not oppose it any longer.

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The House then resolved itself into a Committee, in which Mr. Corry moved a resolution to the effect he had stated, for advancing a sum not exceeding four guineas per man, &c.; which was passed, and the report was ordered to be received the next day.

Mr. Bankes asked which of the two bills on the subject of the Irish militia was intended to be brought on the next day.

Mr. Secretary Yorke said, he should have thought it more convenient to the House, and a saving of a great deal of time if they were both to come on together in the discussion upon the principle; but if Gentlemen chose to exercise their lungs twice upon one subject, he could have no objection, and the debate must therefore necessarily be put off on one of them. The one which was to come on the next day, was that which stood first in order, and therefore he moved that the bill for making provision for augmenting the militia of Ireland be postponed to Wednesday. Ordered.

Deferred to Wednesday the Committees of Supply and of Ways and Means.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

TUESDAY, APRIL 10,

In the appeal from the Court of Chancery, *Richardson v. the two Universities*, counsel was heard for the appellants. The further hearing was deferred until Thursday next.

On the motion of the Lord Chancellor, the cause of *Woodford v. Thellusson* was postponed to the 20th instant, when the Judges are to attend.

Mr. Rickman presented at the bar the accounts of the commissioners of the Caledonian canal.

The *Earl of Suffolk* highly approved of that undertaking, as one likely to be productive of great advantage, not only to that particular part of the island but to the whole of the kingdom. He wished to know whether it was the intention of Ministers to make any addition to the very insignificant sum that they had allotted for the annual prosecution of that work. He was disposed to give due praise to the intention of Ministers, with regard to that national object, but he was of opinion that 20,000*l.* was by no means adequate to the importance of such an object.

Lord

Lord Auckland, in the absence of Ministers, professed himself unable to give any satisfactory answer to the question of the noble Earl.

The *Duke of Montrose* thought that it was incumbent on him to express the very great obligations he was under to Ministers for having, at the risk of incurring some imputations, countenanced a measure which promised so much advantage and improvement to that part of Scotland. He was happy to acquaint the House that very great facilities had already been derived even from the comparatively insignificant progress that the undertaking had made. New communications had already been established in a country where access had been nearly impracticable, and the inhabitants began to feel much advantage from such convenience. That work was, in his opinion, truly a national one, and therefore he did not doubt, but it would meet with all necessary encouragement from his Majesty's Ministers.

DEFENCE OF THE COUNTRY.

The *Earl of Suffolk* rose and spoke nearly as follows: My Lords, not having been in the House on the second reading of the volunteer bill, as I was compelled by indisposition to leave it at the commencement of the debate, I was prevented from giving my sentiments on the principle of that bill; I have therefore taken this opportunity of introducing a motion, in discussing which, I may, without any impropriety, allude to that system, on the merits of which I was accidentally prevented from giving my opinion. There is not any one in this kingdom, who more highly approves of the great and leading principle upon which the volunteer force has been established than I do. I fully subscribe in every way to the gallant and patriotic spirit by which that admirable body of men has been actuated; and if there be trivial defects in its organization, I trust that a little expence and the attention of the legislature will remedy them. Although I admit that there are some inconsistencies in that system, yet I am far from concurring in that persevering opposition that has been made to it. Many of the arguments have turned upon verbal niceties and altercations, and I really think that much time, that could have been better employed, has been consumed in the consideration of them. I have that confidence in his Majesty's Government, as well as in those persons who shall be called upon to execute the provisions of the volunteer bill, that where any doubts may arise upon the meaning of any particular clause, it

it will be interpreted liberally, and rather to the advantage of the individual who thinks he is entitled to a benefit from it. If I may be allowed to give my opinion, without referring to any thing that has been heretofore said either here or else where, on the degree of efficiency that the volunteers are capable of, I am decided in preferring them to an armed peasantry. They, in my judgment, possess a competent degree of discipline, and certainly may be incorporated with infinite advantage either with the army or militia. Besides, I much doubt whether it be possible to arm the peasantry to the extent that has been recommended, with that celerity that would enable us to reap the full advantage of their services. Even the volunteers, as I am informed, are very far from being completely armed. At an earlier period of the present session, I took an opportunity of submitting, as a military man, some ideas to your Lordships, as to what I conceived necessary to be done for the more complete defence of the country; and it is with much regret I have perceived that none of them have been deemed deserving the notice of his Majesty's Ministers. I recommended the establishment of a central depôt, to which seven or eight thousand men should periodically repair, there to be instructed in military tactics, under the command of a well-informed and experienced staff. The advantages of even that inadequate share of discipline would be soon visible, both in the officers and privates, and particularly in the former, who, in my opinion, have much greater occasion for instruction than those they command. There is also another part of our defence which, in my judgment, Ministers have not considered, as they should have done; I allude to the principle of limitation in the volunteer system. The maritime counties, the most exposed and the most liable to attack, are governed by the same rules in this respect that the inland counties are; an error in my mind pregnant with danger, and which cannot be too soon corrected. I also recommended the construction of Martello towers, and illustrated the immense advantages of such a mode of fortification, by the circumstance that a serjeant and twelve men working a single gun in one of them had defeated an English ship of the line and a 44-gun frigate. Instead of resorting to that cheap and effectual mode of defence, his Majesty's Government, at least the military part of it, have, with immense labour and expence, constructed lines of circumvallation, which, as a soldier and an Englishman, I am happy to hear are crumbling daily into ruins. My Lords,
if

If those whose duty it is to provide for the defence of the country, for the mechanical part of it I should say, had acted as they should have done, they would have erected fortresses in Kent, Sussex, Essex, Dorsetshire; Devonshire, Yorkshire, and the county in which Newcastle is placed. A competent garrison in each of those forts would have occupied a considerable portion of the enemy's troops, and if they could not have eventually maintained them, would have effected at least that which, in all military operations, is of the greatest consequence, namely, creating a great loss of time to the attacking army. There is another measure in which I think there has been much shameful and unnecessary profusion, I mean the article of barracks, in the construction of which two millions have been already expended, and to complete which nearly an equal expence must be incurred. The Government could have provided better for the accommodation and comfort of the soldier, at one-sixth the expence, had they resorted to the practice of hutting, such as was customary during the American war. In some places where they had determined on building barracks, they have abandoned the plan, and left them half constructed, because they at length perceived that the situations were too exposed, and that they were likely, in case of invasion, to prove rather an accommodation to the enemy than to our own troops. When I speak in approbation of that degree of discipline which the volunteers have obtained, let it not be thought that I undervalue the exertions of an armed peasantry. I know from experience how formidable the attacks of an armed population, possessing great local information, acquainted with every hedge, rivulet, and green lane, may be. When I commanded the brigade of guards in America, I was on more than one occasion compelled by the men in *white shirts* (the militia of that country, or, as we would call them, the armed peasantry), and sometimes by an inferior number of them, to a precipitate, and not unfrequently a difficult retreat, and there was not a man under my command who would not have rather encountered the regulars of the American army, than that particular description of force. As to the use that may be made of bodies of men of that character and organization, I fully agree with an hon. Officer in another House, with whom I have not the honour of being acquainted, and who, I hear with regret, is not employed. There is a noble friend of mine, I mean Lord Moira, to whom Government has at last thought proper to give a command; but how have they

they treated that noble and excellent commander? Why, although he is invested with the chief command of the northern part of the island, they have not thought proper to give him any of the privileges that usually accompany it. They have been lavish where they should have been parsimonious, and have been parsimonious where they should have been liberal. When they had an opportunity of manifesting their sense of that noble Lord's services and great military talents, they neglected it, and conferred the command of two vacant regiments on junior officers. The only compensation my noble Friend has had, during more than twenty years, for all his labours in supporting the interests and maintaining the honour of his country, has been a colonel's half pay, a paltry two hundred pounds a year. When he commanded the army at Southampton, he was restricted, from what motives I cannot tell, as much in point of patronage as he is at present; and when he resigned that command, he was not less than ten thousand pounds out of pocket by the honour that had been conferred on him. Ministers may say, and I know it has been said, that there was no necessity for the noble Lord to involve himself in such expence; but to this I will answer, that the liberal nature of my noble Friend could not bear to see the poor emigrants, by whom he was surrounded, starving on the miserable allowance that they drew from Government; that his expences were incurred in feeding and supporting them, and that, therefore, it was not to be wondered at if his fortune, great as it was, was too little for his generous and compassionate mind. I do not wish to trespass longer on your Lordships' attention. I am aware that on a question of this delicate nature it may be urged, that considerable confidence should be placed in the exertions and intentions of the Executive Government. I trust, my Lords, I am as little disposed as any of you to entertain an improper distrust of those who are honoured with his Majesty's confidence; but I will not, through the rashness of confidence, endanger the safety of the country: I say, my Lords, as the great and venerable Earl of Chatham did formerly in this House: 'Confidence is a plant of slow growth in an aged bosom.' I shall not occupy any more of your Lordships' time, but move, That a Committee be appointed to provide for the defence of the country, and for inquiring into the preparations that have been made to meet the menaced danger.

Lord. Hawkebury—My Lords, I shall occupy but a very small portion of your time, which, I conceive, would be

much better employed in discussing and perfecting that bill which forms part of our national defence, and the adjourned consideration of which is fixed for this day. If the noble Lord had urged one single reason to justify the appointment of such a Committee as he has moved for, I should have felt it my duty to state at large, to your Lordships, my reasons for opposing his motion, and the grounds upon which I have formed my conviction, that a parliamentary Committee is not the most practicable mode of obtaining those results the noble Earl seems to aim at. The military defence of the country has been entrusted by a competent power to the care of the commander in chief; and if he be guilty of misconduct, he is as liable to censure and removal as any one of his Majesty's Ministers. He is responsible for his conduct, and may be called to account for it. I am persuaded the illustrious person who fills that office does and will always avail himself of the advice and experience of those whom he supposes most competent to give him information, and I conceive it would neither be prudent nor decorous in Parliament to interfere, except upon very extraordinary and unexpected circumstances indeed. I must, therefore, my Lords, give my negative to the motion of the noble Earl, for the reasons I have before stated, that he has made out no case, and that he has assigned no good grounds for the appointment of such a Committee.

The question was then put on Lord Suffolk's motion, and negatived without a division.

VOLUNTEER REGULATIONS BILL.

The House having resolved itself into a committee to consider further of the above bill, several verbal amendments were agreed to.

A discussion took place on the clause which requires commanding officers to give to volunteers changing their residence, or removing from one corps to another, certificates. An amendment was proposed by Lord Grenville, specifying the distance, upon which a division took place. Contents 7—Not contents 35—Majority against the amendment 28.

On the clause which subjects non-commissioned officers to military law, it was proposed by Lord Grenville to omit the word "farriers," as those persons receive pay only when on the ground. On a division the contents were, 11

Not contents, 42.—Majority against the amendment, 31.

Lord

Lord Grenville objected strongly to the practice adopted by corps in general, of forming military committees; and thought it necessary to propose a clause for removing such practice. After a few words from Lords Hawkesbury, the Lord Chancellor, Lord Winchelsea, Lord Hobart, and the Duke of Montrose, it was understood that such a clause would be proposed on a future day in the Committee.

Lord Walsingham was then directed to report progress, and the House adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TUESDAY, APRIL 10.

The bill for the improvement of the town and docks of Liverpool was read a second time, and ordered to be committed.

Sir John Anderson brought up the report of the bill for the improvement of Temple-Bar and Snow-hill. The amendments were agreed to, and the bill ordered to be engrossed.

Mr. Dickens, from the office of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, presented at the bar copies of all orders from his Majesty's Exchequer in Ireland, affecting the half-pay of officers on the Irish establishment resident in Great Britain since the union.—Ordered to lie on the table, and to be printed.

Adm. Berkeley seeing the Secretary at War in his place, availed himself of the opportunity to move for certain papers relative to the Barrack department. He trusted there would be no objection made to his motion, and the consequent production of the papers; but if there should, he for the present should not press the subject on the House, farther than to give notice of his intention to make a motion to that effect on a future day.

The *Secretary at War* declared he had every wish to put the House and the hon. Admiral in possession of the fullest and most satisfactory information on the subject to which his motions referred, or on any other connected with the disbursement of the public money, and submitted to the hon. Admiral the propriety of an alteration in the form of his original motions, in order to avoid crowding the table of the House with an unnecessary accumulation of papers.

After some further conversation the following motions were put and agreed to:

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1st. A copy of the contract entered into between Mr T. Neale and the Barrack Master General, for building the barracks at Chichester in the county of Sussex.

2d. An account of the different periods at which the several barracks were to have been completed, and of the penalties provided in case the same should not be completed in the time and on the terms agreed on.

3d. A copy of the form and mode of issuing the certificate by the proper officer of the barrack department.

4th. An account of the number of barracks in the possession of Government at the conclusion of the peace of Amiens, and of the number of men and horses they could contain.

Mr. I. H. Browne presented the report of the Committee appointed under an act of Parliament for conducting the inland navigation between the Eastern and Western Seas, from Inverness to Fort William in Scotland. The report was ordered to be printed, and taken into consideration on Friday se'night.

Mr. Corry postponed his motion relative to the circulating coin in Ireland to Thursday.

IRISH MILITIA.

Mr. Secretary Yorke moved the order of the day for the committal of the Irish militia voluntary offer bill.

On the question being put that the Speaker leave the chair,

Mr. William Elliot claimed the indulgence of the House, while he stated briefly his opinion of the measure before it. In whatever view he considered it, he could not regard it but as an impolitic, imperfect, and inadequate measure. In point of policy, it appeared to him only calculated to remedy a defect which had arisen from the misconduct of his Majesty's Ministers. He recollected, that at the close of the late war, an order had been issued by the adjutant general, for discarding not embodying the Irish militia, which order had been sanctioned by his Majesty's crown officers in Ireland. A short time after, however, it was deemed expedient to renew the militia establishment in that country, and the measure for that purpose allowed a bounty of but two guineas per man, which proving insufficient, another act had been passed about a year since, enlarging the bounty to four guineas, and at that time the bounty for general service was but five guineas. He and his friends had on that occasion opposed the measure, on the ground that

that it would annihilate the recruiting for the army in Ireland, and recommended if the militia were to be raised by bounties like fencibles, to take their services accordingly. What could have been without impropriety done in that instance was now proposed to be done, when it would be a breach of faith and a violation of the constitution of the militia. It had been then stated, that a militia was the natural defence of a country, and that Ireland ought to have a force of that description. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had adverted too with exultation, to the gallant exploits of the Irish militia, and even the right hon. Secretary had stated, on a late occasion, that they possessed that *nonchalance* which peculiarly suited them for becoming good soldiers, and, as if they would be inefficient in Ireland, he proposed to bring them to this country to complete their education. The hon. Gentleman then stated, that his objection to the measure arose chiefly from its not being taken up on necessity, and in this view he differed with his noble friend (Lord Castlereagh), because the necessity might constitute the policy of a measure, he could admit the converse. He also objected to it, because it would place the men out of the circumstances of service for which they had entered, and introduce a system of deliberation among them which would be subversive of discipline. Another important topic was, that the offers, though perhaps spontaneous in some instances, were not so in all; and that many individuals would be dragged into the offer by apprehensions from their comrades. He lamented that the only instance in which a name had been inserted in the lists on the table should be with respect to an officer who had refused to volunteer, and he contended that the officer was strictly justifiable in limiting his services to the terms of his original engagement if he thought proper. The only thing he had heard like an argument was, that by bringing over eight or ten thousand of the Irish militia to this country, the same number of the disposable force would be set free; but he contended that it was no less desirable to augment the disposable force in Ireland. With what view the present measure had been resorted to he could not conceive. He remembered that one of the objections against the union had been, that it would increase the number of absentees from Ireland, and he was convinced it would neither be politic nor just to bring over so great a proportion of the magistrates and gentlemen of Ireland, as composed the officers of such a number of mi-

litia regiments, without sending an equal number of our own in return to that country. The hon. Gentleman was sure that every militia officer who was an enemy to innovation in the constitution of that force, would oppose a measure the probable effect of which would induce the English militia to make offers in return. On all these grounds he felt himself called upon to oppose the measure, because it was not founded either on expediency or necessity, and if it were to be adopted at all, a reciprocal interchange of services should be established, for the militia of both countries.

Mr. Secretary Yorke had listened to the hon. Gentleman with attention, and with so much the more as, while that hon. Gentleman was in office in Ireland, and his right hon. Friend near him (*Mr. Windham*) was one of his Majesty's confidential Ministers in this country, the Parliament of Ireland had passed an act in the year 1799, for allowing the Irish militia to volunteer their services to this country. The danger to Ireland was then as great at least as at present, because the rebellion was not completely put down, and the Squadron of Admiral Bruix in Brest was supposed to be destined for an attack on that country, for it was not till near a month after that fleet had sailed, that its course had been ascertained. The successful operations of the Austrians too on the continent engaged so much of the attention of the French Government at that period, that there could be no pretence for saying, that the danger of invasion of Great Britain was as great as at present. As the hon. Gentleman and his right hon. friend, holding offices under his Majesty, had concurred in such a measure under such circumstances, he thought in consistency they ought not to oppose the present measure. Having so far adverted to the general argument of the hon. Gentleman, he should now shortly state what he had already submitted to the House when opening the present measures. The acceptance of the voluntary offers of the Irish militia was but a part of the plan for augmenting the disposable force in this country; as by bringing 10,000 of that force over an equal number of the regular troops would be set free. But as it had been argued that this would be a breach of faith, and a violation of the constitution of the militia, it was only necessary to consider, whether the necessity was or was not as great now as in 1799. It would readily be admitted, that it was expedient to augment, as much as possible, the disposable force, for the purpose of turning offensive

offensive operations against the enemy, if an opportunity should offer. His Majesty's government had no intention of weakening the force in Ireland. If Parliament should be of opinion that 8,000 or 10,000 of the Irish militia should be brought over to this country, it was in contemplation to send over an equal number of the army of reserve, as well as to augment in the same proportion the militia of that country. The right. hon. Gentleman then vindicated the Government with respect to the order by which the Irish militia had been disembodied, by saying that the loss in men, produced by it, had been insignificant, as the individuals had been enlisted under several acts, and were engaged, some for four years, others during the war. When the system had afterwards been revived, the first bill, which gave but two guineas bounty, passed on the 17th of September 1802, and when that bounty was found insufficient, the second, allowing a bounty of four guineas, was passed on the 17th April 1803, after his Majesty's message of the 8th of March, when the renewal of the war was probable, and a short time after the war bounty was announced; so that the measure could not have interfered to any extent with the recruiting of the regulars. As to the recommendations of the hon. Gentleman, and of his friends, to take the services of the militia as fencibles at that period, he should only observe, that the question then was only to replace the Irish militia, not for bringing them to England, nor was the latter at present the question, but so far as the voluntary zeal of individuals should influence them to offer their services. He insisted the Irish militia would, wherever employed, in England or Ireland, always do their duty against the enemy. As to the observations of the hon. Gentleman, respecting an over-ruling necessity, which he stated to have existed in 1798, when the English militia went to Ireland, he admitted the necessity in that instance; but he contended the act had been continued after the necessity had ceased; for many regiments had been sent over after the rebellion had been put down, and the French had gone to the Mediterranean. But what could the hon. Gentleman say to the offers of the Irish militia in 1799? The necessity was certainly as great now as then. Much had been said of the danger of introducing a system of deliberation into a military body, but he should ask any Gentleman conversant in military affairs, whether it was not usual for captains to assemble their companies round, and consult them, whether they chose to have the necessary

fary stoppages from their pay made in a particular way? He should ask the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Windham), what he had thought of the offers of the troops, who had entered for limited service, and had so gallantly volunteered in the expedition to Egypt? what he thought of the twentieth regiment? what of the flank companies of the fortieth, who had been so spiritedly led on by Colonel Spencer in Egypt? what of the offers of the antient Irish? He lamented as much as the hon. Member the insertion of the name of the officer to whom he had alluded in the list, and agreed that he was perfectly justifiable in regulating his conduct by his circumstances. The hon. Gentleman had asked, with what view the present measure was to be adopted, whether it was merely to accept the services of the Irish militia, or to make the service of the militia of both countries reciprocal. His Majesty's servants had no idea of extending the services of the English militia to Ireland, and only two or three regiments had offered; but if a necessity should unfortunately arise from the existence of rebellion in that country, he should have no hesitation to add, that he should feel it his duty to encourage such offers. Only two regiments of the Irish militia had been employed under the act of 1799. He was sorry to have detained the House so long, but as a militia officer, he confessed he did not view the measure with any apprehension for the constitutional establishment of that body.

Mr. Calcraft was desirous to say a few words, and had felt anxious to catch the Speaker's eye immediately after the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down. Though he agreed with that right hon. Gentleman in two or three points, he could not admit that the arguments he had used had reconciled him to what he looked upon as a breach of the fundamental constitution of the militia force. If an over-ruling necessity existed, he was sure there would be no difference of opinion in the House. But it had been said, that the offers of the Irish militia were in payment of the debt of gratitude which they owed this country for the services of the English militia: he contended that these debts, when paid, would involve the English militia in a similar offer in return. The question was not justifiable on constitutional ground, nor on grounds of policy or expediency. The right hon. Gentleman had passed over the constitutional consideration of the question altogether. If he had looked into the preamble of the militia acts, he would find it there stated, that it was expedient to keep up within the realm

realm a well ordered and well disciplined militia. If the service was to be altered so as to prevent the gentlemen of property from entering into it, the militia could not be well ordered, and if the militia should be made a deliberative body, it could not be well disciplined. This had taken place already with respect to one part of the military force of the country, the volunteers, and he trusted it would not be extended to the rest of it. He maintained that it was a degrading situation for an officer to be placed in, to assemble his men about him, and ask them, however noble his object, whether they would be disposed to engage in a particular service with him. He was of opinion, that, unless the service was reciprocal, the service of the militia of either country should be kept out of sight of the other, though in an extreme case it might not be so. If a landing of the enemy should unfortunately take place here, and there should be no attempt on that country, nor probability of attack, it would in such a case be justifiable to bring the militia over. It was the opinion of military men of experience, that militia regiments would be more effectually employed in their own counties than out of them, because they would be more warmly assisted by their friends and acquaintances in case of actual danger, and that was the reason why a military officer in one of the maritime districts, kept as many of the militia regiments in their counties as could conveniently be done. There was no similarity between the present period and 1798, when a rebellion raged in Ireland, a French force had landed there, and an exhausted army in this country precluded the means of reinforcing the troops in that country in any other manner than by accepting the offers of the militia regiments. Though he had been one of those who had volunteered on that occasion, yet finding it now used as a precedent, he believed it would have been wiser to attach the individuals who volunteered from the militia to old regular regiments, as had been then recommended by gentlemen who opposed the violation of the militia constitution. He was ready to allow every credit to the loyalty, the patriotism, and good intentions of the gentlemen of the Irish militia, who had offered their services in the present case, and he trusted they would attribute the same motives to him, and those who opposed the measure under discussion. The militia was raised on the landed property of the country; and if the present offers should be accepted, the consequence would be, that the landed gentlemen of Ireland would be obliged to provide

for 8000 or 10,000, after having raised 18,000, which had been looked upon as a just proportion for the country. If the object was to augment the force of the country, it ought to be done generally, not in the Irish militia in particular. There was no question of the loyalty and efficiency of the Irish militia, but he could not see why 10,000 of them were to be removed, if to be replaced by so many from the army of reserve, of nearly the same state of discipline. The augmentation, though that question was not properly before the House, would raise a competition against the six new battalions to be raised in Ireland. The hon. Gentleman who opened the debate, had alluded to the ill consequence of taking so many of the gentlemen of property from Ireland, as would come over with their regiments. The right hon. Gentleman had stated, that it was not the intention of Government to weaken the military force in Ireland, for that if 10,000 were to be withdrawn from it, a like number was to be sent over in their place. He would ask them, what was to be gained but a breach of the great constitutional principle on which the militia was formed? When in 1802 the interchange of the service of the militia of both countries had been agitated, the House had decided, that they should be confined to the respective countries. If Ministers wish to get rid of the militia altogether, they ought to say so, and not keep it hanging over gentlemen, that if they should not join in an offer of service at some future period, they should be told they were ungrateful. The constitution of the militia should not be trenched upon by a side wind, nor in a collateral manner. As to the offers of the Irish militia in 1799, which the right hon. Gentleman had quoted as a precedent, they were only a return for the services of the English militia; but this measure would go to overturn the whole system, by laying the English militia under an obligation of making other offers in return for those now made. If any ground of necessity or expediency had been laid for the bill, he should not have opposed it, but contemplating it under the unfavourable consequences which appeared to him likely to result from it, he should oppose the Speaker's leaving the chair.

Mr. Alexander was happy to hear the question argued on constitutional grounds, with the fairness and candour with which the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had treated it. He was particularly gratified at his having taken it up in that view, because the measure had been charged from another quarter as a consequence of the incapacity of his Majesty's Government;

vernment; and he must say, that the allegations of incapacity were much too frequently employed, as well as that there was no description of force provided for the defence of the country, militia, reserve, volunteers, &c., that had not been degraded by the manner in which they had been adverted to by gentlemen. He thought that on every ground of public policy, the offers of the Irish militia ought to be accepted, as it appeared to him that no opportunity should be omitted for augmenting the disposable force in this country. If Ireland were the object of the enemy, it could only be attacked from Brest, or some of the ports of Holland, but not by any part of the great Boulogne flotilla. He contended that, in a constitutional point of view, nothing could be brought into precedent that should not be sanctioned by the wisdom of the Legislature, and that the Legislature of the day would always guard against any injury that might be apprehended from the influence of the precedent not justified by circumstances. As to the observation that this measure would convert the militia into a deliberative body, he contended that it was unfounded, because as soon as the act was over the deliberation ceased, and an individual act constituted no system. If the time should arrive that Ireland should be attacked, he was convinced that there was not a man in England who would not willingly shed his blood in its defence. The hon. Gentleman then adverted to the number of shipping and convenience of ports in England for conveying a disposable force to any foreign destination, and concluded with giving his support to the motion for the Speaker's leaving the chair.

Mr. Banks could not but consider the present measure as one of the most important subjects that could arrest the attention of the Legislature. It was a direct infringement of the militia system, and was resorted to without any necessity to justify it. If we ceased to adhere to the principles upon which that system was founded, we might be found to act without the guidance of any principle at all; and we might soon be hurried into a stream which we should be unable to resist, and by which we might be carried to incalculable extremities. It was only the extremely perilous and unnatural state in which Ireland was placed in 1798, that could by any means have permitted us to overlook those principles which before had uniformly been held sacred. What is the object of the present bill? It goes to take away from Ireland; the most vulnerable part of the empire, 10,000 men of its best disciplined force, and of that species of force which is least able to spare. So far the plan must be acknowledged

ledged to be novel and surprising. Both countries may be in real danger ; but it is universally acknowledged that Ireland is in ten times more danger than Great Britain. Were that not the case, why should we be so lavish of our panegyric on the patience, the perseverance, and the intrepidity of our blockading force under Admiral Cornwallis, unless we were sure that to his vigilance in preventing the sailing of the Brest fleet, the safety of Ireland is chiefly to be ascribed ? But we are told, that if this force be taken away from Ireland, it is to be supplied by another ; and by what other ? By a portion of the army of reserve. Can that be regarded as an effectual supply ? Surely not ; for the one you take must be confessed to be of superior discipline. Indeed, the whole of the business seems so unaccountable to common reason, that Ministers must be supposed to have some private motives for their conduct, which they are unwilling to disclose. They surely would not openly violate the militia laws, were it not that they intended to introduce for all times and occasions a reciprocation of the services of the militia of both countries. This mutual interchange of services could not, however, be placed on the same ground. The militia of Ireland was raised on a different footing from that of England. The latter was raised by ballot ; the former by bounties, and, consequently, might be more manageable. As to the voluntary offers said to be made here and in Ireland, they deserved any thing but the name of voluntary. On the part of the officers, the offer might arise at the moment from a sense of duty, or a point of honour ; but it should never be ascribed to spontaneous and unprompted alacrity. The direct contrary was well known to be the fact. Indeed, whether the offer came from the officers or the men, it was equally abominable. On the part of the officers it might be suggested by ambitious views, or a wish to ingratiate themselves with persons in power. If it came from the men, the danger attending it would be ten-fold greater, and would involve all the inconveniences and confusion that must arise from military men erecting themselves into deliberative bodies. Over such men, fired by the zeal and spirit with which declaimers amongst them might then be naturally actuated, what authority could officers retain and exercise ? The services of the English militia may soon be called for under the same pretence of a voluntary offer ; nor will it stick there ; the same mode may be applied to the volunteers. The exuberant zeal of some of the corps may suggest the offer, and advantage might soon be

be taken of such an example. If no discrimination was to be made in these offers of voluntary service, where could they be supposed to stop? The fatal tendency of such an example, he trusted the wisdom and caution of the House would seasonably provide against, and not permit them to be so easily worked upon as they were in the year 1798. They should recollect, that permitting innovations of this nature, must render a service easy and acceptable in its origin, grievous and oppressive by an abuse or infringement of its principles, and that the operations of it must prove of such personal inconvenience and national detriment, that it is enough to dissolve and disorganize the whole militia service. There were other and more effectual modes of raising the force required: they might indeed require something of more expence; but under the present circumstances of the country, a trifling addition of expence should not be attended to. We should no doubt be grateful for the gallant offer which the zeal of the Irish militia has prompted them to make; but the prudence of Parliament should dictate something more to be relied upon than such temporary and occasional expedients.

Colonel Hutchinson stated the grounds on which he felt it his duty to support the bill. He should support it as a measure which could not fail to have the happiest effects on the situation of Ireland. He wished, however, to state distinctly to the House, the grounds on which this opinion was founded. It was from an idea that the interests of all ranks of the community in Ireland would be benefited by the measure, that he was determined to vote for it on the present occasion. The manufacturers and agricultural peasants of Ireland would, by coming into this country, have an opportunity of contemplating the happiness which prevailed among the lower orders, and would be prompted to emulate and to cultivate those habits from which this happiness and comfort proceeded. They would have an opportunity of observing in how many respects the inhabitants of this part of the united empire; excelled those of a similar description in Ireland; and it was not to be denied that the circumstances of superiority were various, and from such a review they would see the propriety of acting on the principles by which this superiority was procured. They would learn to appreciate the value of husbanding their time, and would see the advantage of pursuing that system of habitual industry which, in this country, was the distinguishing feature of the lowest, in common with the highest ranks in society. The advantages

tages arising from the union of public sentiment, would not fail to excite their attention, and from the comparison which must arise in their minds, it was natural to anticipate the most important alteration of public opinion on their return to their native land. Respect for the people of this country would necessarily be created, and a degree of affection would be contracted which, under the present circumstances of the empire, could not possibly exist. It would be seen that they came into a country where they were received as fellow citizens, as sharers of the same constitutional privileges and political rights. The consequence of such an interchange of opinions was obvious. It was, more than any other circumstance, calculated to destroy those feelings of prejudice, which it was so material to eradicate. They would unlearn much of that misconception which, from a variety of circumstances, now prevailed. But above all, the beneficial effects of the measure would operate in shewing the people of Ireland, that there was a great distinction to be made betwixt the feelings of this country at large, and the opinions and system, not of this Ministry alone, but of any cabinet that had hitherto been formed. It would convince them that whatever the perversity and wickedness of any cabinet might be with regard to Ireland, this policy was not countenanced or supported by public opinion. Ministers might act on narrow, illiberal principles, but the sentiments of an English public would be found to be candid, liberal, and generous. The militia of Ireland, who now volunteered their services to this country, would leave it with the impression that the people were not partakers in the persecuting policy of any Administration, but were inspired with every wish of extending to all parts of the empire the blessings of an equitable system of government. But this was not the only view which he entertained of the beneficial consequences of the measure. The gentlemen who were to command the militia regiments which were to volunteer their services to this country, would likewise learn many important lessons by this extension of their services. The House would keep in view that they were principally land-owners, who necessarily maintained a most important and interesting relation with the lower orders in Ireland. He entertained a hope that they would feel it their duty to compare the situation of the tenantry of England with that of the tenantry of Ireland; to view their relative degrees of comfort and happiness, and on their return to Ireland employ themselves in introducing the improvements which

which such a review would naturally suggest. Such a review must indeed most powerfully impress on the mind of every land owner that his real interest consisted not in the number of pounds which he was enabled to put in his pocket, but in the general diffusion of that domestic enjoyment which rendered the lower orders the best tenants, as well as the most valuable members of society. These were the general principles and views by which he felt himself called on to give his support to the bill. But while he was resolved to give the measure his support, he begged leave to add, that he could not give that support unconnected with certain conditions. He would be sorry indeed to think that an offer so liberal as that of the Irish militia, should be received without some corresponding return of liberality, and even justice, on the part of this country. The present was a moment of the greatest interest for the security of both countries, and when it was considered how great was the armed force of this country, Ireland was not to be deprived of a large proportion of well disciplined troops, without receiving an equivalent for this diminution of the existing means of defence. This was not, however, the only point of view in which the effects of the measure should be contemplated. It was not merely the armed force of the privates in the militia regiments volunteering their services to this country, that Ireland would lose by the measure. As he had already remarked, the great majority of the officers were land owners, whose presence at all times of high importance, was more especially requisite at a time of unparalleled difficulty and danger. One great source of the present unfortunate state of Ireland was, that there was not a sufficient number of the country gentlemen resident in the country. Of this description of the inhabitants of Ireland, the services were of the highest moment to the interests and the happiness of the lower and industrious orders. It was their peculiar business to be the supporters of the poor under circumstances of distress, to be their advisers in circumstances of difficulty, to be their patrons and protectors against schemes of oppression. One great objection against the union was, that the residence of the land owners would be discouraged. Whatever advantages might arise from the union, in relation to the general interests of the empire, this was an evil which had materially increased. In agreeing to the present bill, therefore, he could not discharge his duty without requiring that before Ireland should be deprived

prived of the residence of so great a part of the landed interest, some adequate return should be afforded. It would be contrary to every sentiment of justice, as well as every feeling of humanity, to increase in Ireland an evil already so crying and so enormous, without taking precautions to prevent its further progress, so far as it could be effected by the bill now before the House. The return then which he asked was; that a certain proportion of the militia corps of this country should be sent to Ireland in the room of those regiments of Irish militia which had agreed to extend their services to this country. He was not inclined to deny, that in asking this exchange, he asked for a return which, by many Members, would be considered as of the highest value. It was certainly asking a good deal of the officers and privates of militia corps in this country, to give up all the comforts they enjoyed here for the purpose of volunteering their services to Ireland. In this case, however, it was to be considered, that the inconvenience was only one of a temporary duration; whereas the union of the two countries had placed the gentlemen of Ireland under inconveniencies which were permanent in their duration. He would put it to the candour of the House, whether Irish gentlemen were not labouring under a very considerable inconvenience, in consequence of their attendance in Parliament in this country? This inconvenience, however, they cheerfully submitted to, from an enlarged consideration of the advantages accruing to the whole of a great empire. When he proposed the return which he had alluded to, he did not think, therefore, that he asked what was unfair, unreasonable or oppressive. The best claim on the militia of this country to volunteer their services to Ireland was, that by this extension of service they materially contributed to the defence and security of the kingdom in one part where it was most peculiarly vulnerable. In the case of the attendance of Irish gentlemen, an inconvenience never to be removed was submitted to. In the present instance all that was called for on the part of Ireland was submission to an inconvenience of a temporary nature, at a crisis when all that was dearest to both countries was at stake. But a good deal had been insisted on as to the violation of the principles of the militia establishment. He could not help thinking that, if Gentlemen who urged this objection had taken the trouble to allude a little to the records and usages of Parliament, they would not have laid so much stress as they appeared

peared to do on the argument. Gentlemen would do well to recollect that a standing army, such as it now existed, was repugnant to the original principles of the constitution, but a difference of circumstances had in the lapse of years produced the present extended establishment. In judging of the expediency of the measure before the House, he thought it but fair, therefore, to look back to former precedents, and not to stand so closely by the strict letter of the militia system. Precedents of the same description certainly did exist, and it was an unfair mode of reasoning to hold up one principle one day and to disclaim it on another occasion, when, perhaps, it was found convenient to hold another species of argument. On the general principle, then, he did not think that the measure was liable to the objections which had been urged against it in the course of this discussion. There were, however, several points on which he wished to make a few observations. If the right hon. Gentleman on the other side (Mr. Yorke) meant that the only return to be made for the militia regiments volunteering to this country should consist of a new body of militia to be raised in Ireland, he should most strongly object to such an arrangement as highly objectionable. If it was meant that the deficiency should be made up by foreign corps, his objection so far from being weakened would be materially strengthened. He had no difficulty in declaring, that he had the strongest objection to the introduction of foreign corps into any part of the empire, but he more particularly objected to their introduction into Ireland in the present circumstances of that country. To suppose that the people of England wanted foreign corps to defend them against the attempts of France, would be disgraceful to the national character. What would the posterity of the present age think of the inhabitants of England being so luxurious or so corrupted as to trust the defence of all that is dearest to men to be upheld by no considerations but the mere low consideration of pecuniary reward? As to Ireland, more particularly, he begged leave to enter his most solemn protest against such a measure as the introduction of any foreign corps. On various occasions Ministers had stated, and they had stated truly, that there was a very visible change in the sentiments and feelings of the people of Ireland, as far as related to the invasion of a French force. Fortunately a most important change on this head had taken place, and at this moment he believed that no part of the population of Ireland entertained

any confidence in the false and delusive promises of the despot of France, who was now threatening a descent on our shores. There was no wish for assistance from a power which was regarded with universal detestation and abhorrence. But though it was true that the people of Ireland had no wish for French assistance, it did not by any means follow that they were satisfied with the conduct of Ministers. Such an assertion had not indeed been made by Ministers, and it was right that it had not been made, for it was an assertion contrary to fact. The hon. Member referred to the letters written by the Lord Chancellor of that country. He characterised this production as one calculated, not to instruct, but misrepresent; not to conciliate, but to irritate. It was a production fitted to insult and degrade the religious opinions of a great majority of the Irish people. It was evidently intended to dictate in matters connected only with the Divine Being and the individuals concerned. It was an indecent, an unjustifiable libel on the character of the people of Ireland. He stated his decided dissent from an idea being entertained that the people of Ireland were at all satisfied with the measures pursued by Ministers since their accession to power, so far as the affairs of that part of the empire were concerned. The hon. Member was then proceeding to enter upon a detail of the conduct of Ministers in regard to Ireland, when he was called to order by

Colonel Vereker, who said, the present stage of the bill was not the proper one for such a discussion. The Colonel not being supported, however, by the opinion of the Speaker,

Colonel Hutchinson was allowed to proceed. He said, he was just about to conclude his observation when the hon. Member had thought proper to interrupt him. He did not wish to add to the irritation of his countrymen, by making any allusion which could have that effect, but he conceived that, even in the present stage of the bill, he had a right to explain his sentiments fully, and to demonstrate on what grounds he was led to support a bill which went to accept the offer of 10,000 of his countrymen to serve in Great Britain. He had no idea of smuggling such a bill through the House at a moment when we ought not to shrink from our duty.

Mr. Burroughs thought that a great part of the hon. Gentleman's speech had nothing to do with the question before the House. He applied this observation particularly

to the employment of foreign corps, and the remarks made on the letters of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland. He contended, that many of the general objections against the bill would be very powerful under the ordinary circumstances of the country. It was to be recollected, however, that the present was not a period of ordinary danger, but a crisis of unexampled interest. It was on this principle that he judged of the bill, and on this ground it had his support. It did not appear to him fair to argue against the bill on the ground that the Irish militia who volunteered their services to this country, were to be immediately removed from Ireland. If he had conceived that the bill necessarily implied this, he could not but have viewed it in a very different light. As it struck his mind, however, all that was meant by the measure was, to enable Parliament to sanction any preparatory measures which particular circumstances might render desirable at a moment of peculiar emergency. Such an emergency might occur at no remote period, and it would be very extraordinary policy, never to think of precautions till the day of actual danger approached. On these grounds he supported the bill.

Mr. Canning had not intended to deliver his sentiments, but to content himself with a silent vote, but the view of the subject taken by his hon. Friend who spoke last, induced him to trouble the House with a few observations. In judging of the bill, there were three points to be taken into consideration. It was to be considered, how far the measure was at all necessary? how far Ireland possessed the means of supplying the force proposed to be sent into this country? and in what manner the deficiency created by this supply was to be repaired? On the first of these points he wished to postpone his observations till he had alluded to the means possessed by Ireland, of furnishing the supply of troops to be raised by the bill. On this point he contended that an hon. Gentleman on the other side (Colonel Hutchinson) had, so far from being out of order, argued in a manner the most strictly logical. When speaking of the means of Ireland to supply the force wanted, nothing was more natural than to allude to the political circumstances and situation of Ireland. When discussing this subject, Gentlemen ought to keep in view, that Ireland at this moment laboured under martial law, that the habeas corpus act was suspended, that a rebellion had burst forth, and that some new insurrection might ere long make its appearance. How far Ireland possessed the means of giving

ing the supply of troops wanted, was therefore a matter of serious inquiry. How far the measure was expedient was an enquiry not less interesting. The principle of the bill, as described by a right hon. Gentleman below (Mr. Yorke), was to procure, by the speediest means, an augmentation of our disposable force. That such an augmentation was desirable all parties allowed, and the only question was, how it was to be most speedily effected. The House had been told by Ministers, that, even with an establishment of seventy thousand English militia, and three hundred and eighty thousand volunteers, our whole regular force was locked up from offensive operations. How, then, was this inconveniency to be removed? Why the fact was, according to the reasoning of Ministers, that what this immense force could not accomplish, was to be effected by an addition of six thousand Irish militia. True it was, that we had previously seventy thousand militia, and three hundred and eighty thousand volunteers; but this was quite unavailing. But only allow us six thousand Irish militia and the scale will be immediately turned; our whole regular force would be at liberty, and we should have as many men as we required to be dispatched on any distant expeditions. Such was the only intelligible view of the reasoning of Ministers; and what could be more ridiculous or absurd? But he wished to put the matter in a point of view, if possible, still more striking. Ministers insisted much on the necessity of a disposable force. But how was it that this force was to be procured? The fact was, that Ministers introduced into this country a proportion of the force of Ireland, raised for limited service; and how did they propose to supply the place of this force? They proposed to do this by raising a new proportion of force for limited service in the same country. The consequence was obvious. The disposable force of the empire was not augmented, while Ministers, by augmenting the force for limited service, cut off the supplies of the regular army. Ministers had nothing consistent or uniform in their views. They knew not what they proposed, and they took no effectual means of carrying any of their plans into effect. They were subject to eternal variations of opinion. They never advanced boldly to any object—

“ They lightly waddled to the end in view.”

The right hon. Gentleman concluded by declaring his intention to vote against the bill, as quite inadequate to any great object.

Colonel

Colonel Baskard disapproved of the measure, as it would tend to injure, and perhaps finally to destroy that old and constitutional part of our military force, the militia. It had been the fashion of late to run down the militia, but he should always consider them as the best safeguards of the constitution; and therefore he should resist every attempt to convert them into regulars. One of his principal objections to this measure was, that it would convert the different regiments into deliberative bodies, which would necessarily be the destruction of all discipline. It had been said that this was a voluntary offer on the part of the Irish militia; he had no doubt of the loyalty and spirit of that body of men, but he knew from what passed in England some years ago, what these voluntary offers meant. He believed that many of those who went to Ireland in 1798 went merely upon a principle of honour, and not from their free consent, and he believed that some of the regiments volunteered merely to spite their officers. Upon the whole, he considered this measure as not only useless, but dangerous.

Mr. Pitches could not see any one benefit that could result from the measure; it would not even have the effect of promoting inter-marriages, because the strong attachment of Irishmen to celibacy, and the chastity of English women, would prevent any thing of that kind taking place. When the volunteer bill passed the House, Ministers represented their military fabric as complete, but now they found that it was out of repair, and that it wanted an Hibernian pier to support it. He disapproved of this measure, because it would render them an amphibious race, for if this plan of interchanging the militia was adopted, some of them would always be upon the sea.

Sir R. Hill said, that it was a subject upon which military men were the most competent to decide; and he begged leave to read, as part of his speech, a letter he had received from a nephew of his, who had seen considerable service at Toulon, in Egypt, and in Ireland; and who, though a young man, had attained the rank of Brigadier General. Sir Richard then read part of the letter, which expressed a strong opinion of the advantages that would result from an interchange of the militia; and spoke in high terms of the Irish militia.

Colonel Vereker considered Ireland as the most vulnerable part of the British empire at the present moment, and therefore he did not understand the policy of a measure which took away such a number of troops that were at present

sent so well calculated for its defence, without making an adequate provision for the deficiency which this measure would occasion. He did not think the supply could be adequately made out of the army of reserve, for the Irish militia were as good, or very nearly so, as any of his Majesty's regular troops. He should, however, not object to the measure, if the supply of the deficiency was to be filled up from the English militia. He professed himself to be attached to his native soil in preference to any other, and he could not therefore allow Ireland to lose this great force in the hour of danger. If the invasion of Ireland was out of the question, he should be one of the first to offer his services at the head of his regiment to come to England, but he would not agree to it under the present condition of things, nor could he forget the old proverb, of "Christen your own child first."

Mr. Windham supposed that, as the right hon. Gentlemen on the other side found they did not make much progress by argument, they meant to carry the question by some other means. It was true what had been urged against them that night was not new; but it was not possible to consider that or any other military measure, without reference to the whole of our military system. He should confine what he had to say to the measure before the House, reserving what else he had to offer for the other measure, which was to be discussed the following or some other day. He confessed he was one of those who was glad that there was to be an opportunity for Gentlemen exercising their lungs, as the right hon. Secretary called it, (he supposed in contradistinction to what on a former day he had termed solid votes,) on both measures separately. He contended that what took place in 1798, when the English militia volunteered to Ireland, was entirely distinct. The constitutional principle of holding the militia to limited service was not inflexible. There was no inconsistency in those who consented to give way in some circumstances, refusing to give way in others, and those who consented then, were not bound by that consent from future opposition. The other question as to the vote in 1799, was *toto cælo* different, for there was then a rebellion in Ireland, a foreign enemy was also in the country, and menacing it with a greater force. The proposition originated with the Irish Parliament, and the circumstances of the present time were entirely different. As to the return of the visit, it would never end; visit would beget visit, and continued transition and intermixture would be established, except the thing rest-

ed

ed upon the first return. It was probable that in 1799, while the rebellion still subsisted, the English militia were thought a safer description of force for Ireland. He at that time supported the sending some of the English militia to Ireland, and the transfer of the services of a part of the Irish militia to another part of the empire. The experience gained by that proceeding was one reason for his opposition to the present measure. The effects which the precedent had on the character and discipline of the militia force, had been stated by an hon. Gentleman who went before him (Colonel Bastard). He first objected to the measure that it was a breach of good faith. The maxim of *volenti non fit injuria* could not be justly applied, as the men felt themselves in a disagreeable situation, and a sort of necessity was put upon them, when part of their corps offered, to follow the example. He instanced the situation of Lieutenant Browne, mentioned in a sort of way in the papers so as to admit of an invidious construction: this gentleman had in reality shewn more manliness by refusing to volunteer. He recollected a similar instance when the Member for Nottingham (Mr. Pierrepoint) was the only man that refused to give his assent at a time when the act for enabling the English militia to serve in Ireland was passed as it were by acclamation. The effect on the discipline of the militia was most pernicious. One deliberation led to another; and if it even ended on the instant, was it not a degrading and pernicious thing that a commanding officer should be obliged, even for that once, to descend to a canvas and solicitation of his men? Let gentlemen take a lesson from experience. It was well known that the officers who had been obliged to take such a step, had never been able to recover their authority. The present high state of discipline in the militia, was owing to its long, regular, and unchanged establishment. If the system should be broke in upon, that cause of perfection would no longer remain. These two objections lay to the plan as laid down. If Parliament was called upon to vote the measure on trust, that was intelligible. If Ministers offered one set of reasons while they acted on another, how was Parliament to decide? It was argued, that though the power was given, it was not meant to use it immediately. If any thing required immediate use and was unfit to keep, it was certainly an offer of voluntary service. It was more liable to spoil than mackerel itself (*a laugh*). The circumstances would change, and the disposition of the men would change with them. It was

was certainly a great effort of ingenuity to create a disposable force by transferring from one Island to another a force in its own nature not disposable; and it was extremely whimsical to think of creating a force for offensive operations, not by increasing the army, but by raising more militia. As to the recruiting service, it could not go on. Gentlemen met themselves in their own market; the moment they went to Ireland to raise new regiments for general service they would find themselves there already raising 8. or 10,000 militia. The effect of the measure was to bring a force from a country where it was more wanted, to a country where it was less wanted; then to replace it a fresh militia is to be got at a higher price; and to run the same round. Gentlemen who were better acquainted with the character of the Irish militia than he, but not better than the hon. Gentleman who spoke last in opposition to the measure, may see reasons for accepting the offers which he did not see. He therefore voted against the motion.

Lord Castlereagh said that the hon. Gentleman who just sat down, had weakened his charge by admitting, with all the ingenuity that he was known to possess, and the unexampled facility of giving an air of novelty to what had been often repeated, that he could add nothing new to the familiar arguments urged against the present measure. He did not think it right, after the able statements of his right hon. Friend at the commencement of the debate, to go over the same ground at length; but as the charge of silence had been made, he begged leave merely to state the purpose of the measure. It was not an exchange of militia services, on any enlarged principle, that was in the contemplation of his Majesty's Ministers; though that measure could be effected without driving from the militia the gentlemen of property, it would render it the great bulwark of the empire. Looking upon that as one of the best measures that could be adopted, he was sure it would disgust the militia if it should now be prematurely pressed forward. The sentiments and disposition of the militia on this head, ought to be watched and followed up, not anticipated. He thought it right, therefore, to say, that his Majesty's Ministers did not mean this even a beginning or introduction to such a system. They did not even mean to put the matter upon the footing of the year 1798, when a rebellion raged in Ireland, though he was sure if the same necessity existed, there would be but one feeling with respect to voluntary service, without limit of time or place.

place. In his opinion, a high motive of policy was a good ground for accepting a service from the militia beyond what it was bound to by their original constitution. He deprecated the mode of arguing against granting the power, by assuming that it would be abused when it was granted. He protested against the supposition of an intention to withdraw at once 12,000 of the best troops in Ireland, to be replaced not at all, or by troops less disciplined. The object was to add 10,000 men, without interfering with our best description of force, which would thereby be rendered more disposable. He contended that soldiers were frequently put in a deliberative capacity, particularly when called upon to volunteer in a storming party, or on a forlorn hope, or any other service of extraordinary danger. He was sure no soldier would be more ready than his honourable Friend ever was (Colonel Vereker) to volunteer services of danger for the safety of any part of the empire, but he could not approve of the idea of a local patriotism, preferring one part to all the rest. As to the mischief of bringing away the men of property and magistrates in the Irish militia, this would only apply if each regiment were kept in its own district. As it was now, and had always been the case in the Irish militia, to serve in counties distant from their own, he could see no difference between their serving in England and in a remote part of Ireland. As to the next objection, that the raising of an additional militia force would cripple the recruiting, experience had proved it would not. As to the argument that fencibles ought to be raised, he conceived it would be sufficient to reflect, that the men would be raised more speedily, more cheaply and more rapidly, by being incorporated with militia regiments already highly disciplined. Besides, there was so source from which experienced officers could be found for fencible regiments. It was the opinion of the best officers, that with eight new regiments, and ten new battalions, with the existing disposable force more at liberty by the present measure, we should be in a condition to undertake offensive operations. It was not the object of the present measure to lessen the defence of Ireland; if that was the object, the removal of the regular troops would more naturally be thought of. He disclaimed the idea of bringing the Irish militia to this country from any motive of suspicion. He knew the difficulties men had to contend with in their own country; but he had seen the Irish militia tried in the year 1798, by plans of seduction beyond any

thing that the largeness or wickedness of sins would for its own sake ever practise again; and though a few had fallen victims, the great mass had proved inaccessible.

Mr. T. Grenville remarked an inconsistency among the speakers on the other side. The noble Secretary adduced the transactions of 1798 and 1799, as precedents to sanction the present proceedings; while the noble Lord disclaimed making such a use of them. He denied that there was any analogy between the circumstances of the voluntary offer of 1798, and a cold cabinet measure like the present. The noble Lord disclaimed, for his Majesty's Ministers, any idea of making this measure even the foundation of an interchange of militia; but he doubted, whether the manner in which his Lordship spoke would have the effect of quieting the apprehension which some of his hearers might entertain on that subject. There were many modes in a voluntary offer, that may be procured in a manner little short of actual violence. He noticed as a great inconsistency, that while the paper on the table stated the offer to come only from 5000, the bill empowered the disposal of 20,000. With all respect for the Irish militia, and believing them to be as gallant soldiers as any in the world, he did not think either English or Irish militia equal to regular troops; nor could he believe, that the removal of 20,000 Irish militia to this country would give a regular force of the same amount. It was a whimsical argument to say, that this was the quickest way of obtaining 20,000 men, while it was said, that the power, though given, was not to be speedily used. True, the appeal to the volunteer spirit of the army for the formation of storming parties and forlorn hopes, was giving them a deliberative power, but it was a deliberation to be decided on the impulse of the moment, in which Britons would never be wanting. It was widely distinct from a cold deliberation like that of the present measure. He complained, that in matters which were so intimately connected with the regular army, the House was called upon to vote without any account of the regular army before them. Sometimes one Minister and sometimes another took from their pockets papers, which they read as such accounts, and which they put in their pockets again. He thought it wrong that this measure was divided from that which was to replace the force to be taken away. Both should be connected, and Gentlemen would thus have the opportunity of considering the whole together. Agreeing, if this bill passed, there was no security that

the force, the removal of which it would authorize, would be replaced.

Lord De Blaquiere thought it would be an insult to the Irish militia to reject their offers, as if they were not worth accepting. With respect to giving a deliberative power to soldiers, he recollected to have been the instrument of giving it himself in many instances. The orders were issued for weeks together, relative to the expeditions to America, Tonkin, Holland, and Egypt. He deprecated the idea of coupling the English militia in the measure, confident of their alacrity, if their services should be necessary in Ireland. There were now in Ireland 30,000 regulars, and 11,000 militia. If Government wanted to lessen the defence of Ireland, the removal of the regulars would have been the most easy mode of effecting it.

The question being put the House divided: For the Speaker's leaving the chair 124—against it 54—majority 70.

The House went into the Committee; and the report was ordered to be received on Thursday.

Mr. Alexander brought up the report of the Committee on the Irish militia augmentation bounty. The resolution was agreed to; and it was ordered that the Committee on the Irish militia augmentation bill be instructed to make provision accordingly.

Adjourned at half past 11 o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 11.

Counsel were heard in continuation relative to the Scotch cross appeal, *Abercromby v. Fleming*. The further consideration of the case was adjourned till Friday.

The bills upon the table were forwarded in their several stages.

Previous to the order of the day being entered upon,

The *Earl of Suffolk* had a few observations to make respecting a degree of misrepresentation which prevailed in one of the daily papers, of part of what he said the preceding day in reference to his noble and gallant friend the *Earl of Moira*: it was stated, that he said the noble *Earl* received his half pay as a Colonel for only ten years, whereas he observed that he had received it during twenty years. A misrepresentation obtained upon a point of another nature,

ture, and which he was more anxious to rectify. He was stated to have said, that the vacant regiments were bestowed upon officers who had performed no service to their country. What he said, however, was, that these regiments were given to junior officers. The officers in question possessed considerable merit, and for them he entertained the highest respect. He was not a little hurt at the idea that these respectable officers should imagine he had so spoken of them. His Lordship regretted having occasion to notice this matter; and he was of opinion, that the reporters should be granted some indulgence, in order to enable them to be more correct in their reports.

On this remark, one or two peers said "*Order*," on which the noble Earl declined proceeding.

VOLUNTEER REGULATIONS, BILL.

The order of the day being read, their Lordships went into a Committee upon this bill, Lord Walsingham in the chair.

When the twenty-eighth clause was arrived at, it was strongly objected to by Lord Grenville, who censured it as futile, inefficient, unnecessary, and absurd, and these characteristics he thought appeared on the face of the clause so clear, that it was superfluous to take up the time of the Committee. The effect of this clause is, that volunteers, while under arms, or going to the place of exercise, &c. who shall misconduct themselves, may be ordered by the commanding officer into the custody of any person belonging to the corps, while it remained under arms. Lord Grenville concluded by moving for its omission.

The clause was defended as necessary and proper by Lord Auckland and the Earl of Westmoreland. The animadversions of Lord Grenville were supported by Earl Spencer and Lord King.

Lord Harrowby differed from his noble Friend (Lord Grenville) with respect to the clause; he conceived it proper for the due maintenance of discipline, and he thought it might be improved so as to answer every objection, by providing for the attendance of a constable on such occasions.

The discussion upon this clause was terminated by a division, when there appeared, for Lord Grenville's motion, 7—against it 22—majority 15.

Several of the subsequent clauses were disposed of after some discussion, in which the above-mentioned Peers, with the

the addition of the Earl of Morton and the Duke of Montrose, were the principal speakers.

With respect to the 36th clause, which refers to the exercise of the royal prerogative in requiring the military services of his Majesty's liege subjects, Lord Grenville would not then give it any opposition, as it was in the recollection of their Lordships, that a few nights back he had signified his intention to take an early opportunity to bring forward the subject in the important and solemn form of a bill.

In the 39th clause, which relates to the payment of two guineas to each volunteer who assembles on the summons of the Lieutenant of the county, or upon any general signal of alarm, &c. an amendment was moved by Lord Grenville, on which a division took place: for the amendment 14—against it, 24—majority 10.

During the short interval of the exclusion of strangers on this division, another amendment was moved by one of their Lordships, on which almost immediately another division took place: for the amendment 11—against it 24—majority 13.

The subsequent clauses to the 47th were then disposed of. The Chairman was directed to report progress, and the Committee were ordered to sit again the next day.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 11.

Mr. Vanfittart brought up an estimate of the sum which may be wanted for foreign and secret services for the year 1804, which was ordered to be laid upon the table.

Sir John Newport postponed the motion of which he had given notice, upon the subject of the Ilchester election, until Friday next, on account of the absence of the sitting Member for that borough.

Mr. Foster moved for several accounts, for the purpose of shewing the operation of the act of union, viz.

An account of all flour, corn, grain, meal, malt, &c. imported into and exported from Great Britain, together with the bounties and duties paid thereon, from the first of January 1800, to the first of January 1804, distinguishing each species and each year.

An account of the average price of corn, grain, &c. in England and Wales, per quarter, and of oatmeal per boll, &c. from the 13th of March 1802, to the latest period the same can be made up.

An

An account of the duty received on the export of linens from Ireland to Great Britain, since the commencement thereof, distinguishing the rate of duties, number of yards, together with the amount of duties imposed thereon, &c. to the latest period the same can be made up, distinguishing each year, &c. Ordered.

Mr. Windham had a motion to make, to which he understood there was no objection, and he accordingly moved, That there be laid before the House an account of the number of men raised for the army of reserve in each month in Great Britain and Ireland, since the commencement of the act for that purpose, and of the number of men who, during the several periods, have engaged for general service, distinguishing under each head, as far as it can be done, the number of those who have entered for general service, and those who remain on the balloted service, &c. Ordered accordingly.

IRISH MILITIA.

Mr. Secretary Yorke moved the order of the day on the bill for augmenting the militia of Ireland. The order being read, he observed, that by an inadvertency in drawing the bill, the sum to be voted was made to fall wholly upon Ireland, which error he intended to be corrected in the Committee. He then moved, that the Speaker do now leave the chair.

Colonel Craufurd observed, that this bill had so near a connection with that which was the subject of discussion the preceding night, that he could not proceed to deliver his opinions on the one, without shortly alluding to the other. He said he had come down to the House with an intention of voting for the bill of the preceding night, for introducing 10,000 Irish militia into this country upon an emergency, but that he was deterred from doing so when he found for what purposes his Majesty's Ministers intended it, and heard them distinctly disclaim the being in any degree influenced by those reasons upon which alone he founded his opinion of the policy of a measure to which upon other grounds there certainly existed very strong objections. He therefore had felt himself so much at a loss which way to vote that he had gone away without voting at all. But although he stood in that state of doubt with regard to that bill, he had no hesitation whatever in giving his decided negative to the present one. He strongly objected to any increase of that description of force, whose services,

services, if required out of a certain district of the empire, you must accept as a favour, instead of commanding them as a duty. He was indeed for many reasons averse to any augmentation of the militia; and he even went so far as to wish we had no embodied militia at all: he did not mean to say we ought not to have any militia in Britain, but that it ought not to form a part of our embodied force. But besides these general objections to the militia force, he had no scruple in saying, that considering the present situation of Ireland, it would be unwise to keep up in that country a large body of men entirely composed of Irishmen. In saying this he begged he might not be understood as meaning to throw the smallest reflection upon the Irish militia, whose loyalty in the year 1798 had, with the exception of one or two instances, withstood all the attempts which were made to seduce them. The conduct of the greater part of that body did them the highest honour, but it was a trial to which they ought not to be exposed without absolute necessity. The rebellion which raged in that country so few years since, must be recent in every man's memory, and he should be glad to know what proceedings had taken place, on the part of Ministers, to inquire into the causes of that rebellion, or what changes had taken place in the system of Government towards Ireland, for the conciliation of that people, and the prevention of future discontents? None but the measure of an union, which was held out to be a remedy for all ills, and a prompt and efficient means of amelioration to Ireland. But he was anxious to know from his Majesty's Ministers, of what single instance of amelioration it had been productive? The prominent measure which had been held out to the population of that country, as the first great object of the union, and the price of their acquiescence to it, had been positively withheld, and in a manner extremely grating to the feelings of that people; and he was much at a loss to know, what other measure had been obtained for Ireland towards effecting that conciliation and rapid improvement in the country, so speciously held out as the immediate and necessary consequences of the measure. He knew of none: nor could he conceive by what species of magic it was that Ministers affected to change the political sentiments of the great majority of the Irish population from that state which, three years ago, had excited them to open rebellion, in which it was true they were conquered, but, he feared there was too much reason to suppose, not converted; and in proof of his appre-

appre-

apprehensions on this head, stood the necessity avowed by his Majesty's Ministers for reviving martial law in Ireland, founded upon the actual insurrection which took place at Dublin, in three short weeks after the strongest opinions had been avowed in that House, of the perfect loyalty, tranquillity, and security of that whole country. He differed extremely from those who made such assertions at the time, and events justified his conjectures, by the avowed necessity for the continuance of martial law. It was admitted by Ministers, that a spirit of insurrection still lurked there, ready to take advantage of any favourable opportunity. He coincided in the necessity of raising a great body of troops from the mass of the people of Ireland, on the present occasion, but not as a militia force. For though no man was less disposed than he was to question the loyalty of the Irish militia, which they have so gallantly proved, both against domestic and foreign enemies, during the late rebellion in that country, yet still he thought it was exposing that loyalty too much to temptation, if they were to be called to oppose in the field their brothers, relations, and friends; which must unhappily be the case in all civil wars: it was that species of test to which he for one would never consent to expose them. He had strong objections to any extension of the militia, because he did not think it an eligible branch of the public force. He thought troops of the line by all means preferable, or at least fencible regiments; and he had the authority of many gentlemen of Ireland, extremely conversant on the subject, for saying, that fencibles would be, to the full, as easily raised as militia, by the bounties proposed in this case; more especially if the same advantages were offered of provision for their wives and children, as the militia here enjoyed—advantages which surely were as fairly due to fencibles, and troops of the line, as to that branch of the public force whose services were the most limited. He approved the idea of increasing the public force by increasing the number of rank and file in the established regiments; instead of raising entirely new corps, for it was the principle he had originally suggested; but he did not like it as applied to the militia, because he did not approve that species of force. It might be said, that if fencible regiments were raised, it would be difficult to officer them; but he would suggest an immediate resource in the sixteen battalions of the army of reserve, where the services of the officers were at present wasted, but would be rendered

rendered immediately efficient in fencible corps attached as second battalions to regiments of the line. The hon. Officer then adverted to the statements of the public force of the country, made to the House by the right hon. Secretary at War, previously to the recess, which he scrutinized at some length; adding, that though, in such a state of the country, he should be amongst the last to move for specific returns of its military strength, yet when Ministers volunteered those statements of their own accord, they could not blame him for taking advantage of the opportunity afforded him of canvassing the correctness of them. He concluded by saying, he should, in the progress of those measures through the House, move for some other returns for the further elucidation of this subject, and to prove that the troops of the line, which it was most desirable to increase, are not even so numerous as they have been stated.

Mr. Secretary Yorke did not feel it necessary to follow the hon. Officer minutely through the whole detail of his argument, but merely to apply himself to a few points that, he thought should not pass unnoticed. And first, with respect to the subject of the union, which the hon. Officer seemed to think so barren of the good consequences it was expected to produce. He believed it never could have been rationally expected, or feasilily promised by any man, that all the good effects to be hoped from that measure, were to be realized in the short period that has elapsed since it was effected. Those benefits must, in the ordinary course of things, be of gradual growth. What portion of them had hitherto obtained, he would leave it for those hon. Gentlemen, representatives of that country, whom he saw around him, to declare, which they were competent to do, from their local knowledge and observation. With respect to the bill now before the House, he begged to observe, that it was not in fact for any extraordinary augmentation of the militia of Ireland, to which branch of the service the hon. Officer so much objected, but to fill up the vacancy which would be created in that militia, if it should be thought expedient by his Majesty to transfer 10,000 of them to this country; and even if they should not be so transferred, the present bill would do no more than raise the militia force of Ireland to the numbers at which they stood during the last war. With respect to the nature of the militia force, he only felt it necessary to say, that as a matter of opinion he differed from the hon. Officer; and he thought he was well warranted in so differ-

ing from that opinion, by the gallant conduct of that militia in the time of the rebellion, and the efficient bravery they had shewn not only in repelling a domestic, but a foreign enemy, aided, certainly, by another body of their brave and loyal countrymen, of whom he never could speak without the highest and most honourable commendation—the yeomanry of Ireland. With respect to the general strength of the united kingdom, upon which so many invidious comments were so frequently made, he considered it really so formidable as to have very little apprehensions of any inconvenience that could result from the scrutines of the hon. Officer, even upon the minutest details of the public force. For looking around him to the gallantry, the heroism, and the prowess, perpetually displayed by British troops in every quarter of the globe; contemplating the achievements recently effected by a mere handful of British troops in India over the most formidable and numerous armies of the native powers; viewing a few detachments of British cavalry and infantry, annihilating whole armies of forty or fifty thousand men, storming their fortresses, and capturing their artillery; he had no apprehensions for alarm when he looked at home, and viewed such a bulwark for our defence, as an army of 180,000 such troops presented to the foe. When he saw more than 10,000 such cavalry as the handful that cut to pieces the 20,000 chosen men of Scindia's army; when he viewed a field train of 700 pieces of cannon, manned by more than 8,000 well trained British artillery-men to give them effect, he felt none of that alarm which seemed to affect the hon. Gentleman.

Lord Archibald Hamilton opposed the present bill, not merely as a distinct and detached measure, but as coupled with the bill of the preceding night, to which he also strongly objected, as part of a system towards Ireland of which he totally disapproved, and which was designed and calculated to undermine the constitutional principle of a national militia, evinced first by encouraging the militia to volunteer into the army of the line; next, by admitting as officers of militia, persons who were rather strangers, and possessed no qualification in the respective counties into whose regiments they were admitted; and now, by recruiting men for the militia by bounties, and not by ballot. The noble Lord made some allusion to the letters lately written by a noble Law Lord in Ireland, in which it was asserted that the lower classes of the people of Ireland were incapable of being rendered loyal subjects to a protestant government

vernment—a declaration not only falsified by the whole tenor of historical facts, but, coming from such authority, admirably calculated to insult national feeling, and to excite disaffection even where it never existed before.

Mr. Whitfield Keene said, he was one of those who had voted for that measure of union which had been alluded to, and who was convinced it was the sentiment of the enlightened people of Ireland, that it was a measure fraught with the happiest consequences to that country; and though it was not to be expected that in so short a time the measure could have produced any thing like its full effects, yet it had certainly produced one thing that laid the foundation for those good effects which he doubted not would rapidly follow: it removed that most objectionable of all political principles, the existence of two co-ordinate and independent legislatures in the same state, which constantly exposed the tranquillity of the empire to dangers arising from discord and mutual strife, which ambitious or designing men might promote by the agitation of irritating questions. Though he was a native of Ireland, he had spent 40 years of his life in this country, 37 of which he had had the honour of being a member of that House, and therefore he must be supposed free from national prejudice. He would declare his own conviction, founded upon the sentiments of other Gentlemen most conversant in the local state of that country, that of the whole mass of the lower orders of the community there, more especially in the southern provinces, one-third, at least, were of a description that, in every war which involved the empire, were rather to be considered dangerous than friendly to the state; men of dissolute and riotous dispositions, easily moulded to the mischievous designs of seditious demagogues. Of this description of men it was desirable to get as many as possible out of the country; because thus they would be removed out of the way of temptation, and have their minds improved by seeing the manners of other countries, and acquire new habits of industry. Removed from home, and forming part of those armies that carried the glory of British arms to the farthest parts of the globe, there were no men on earth more distinguished for their bravery and loyalty; in the various walks of industry, none more distinguished for their perseverance. But if there ever was a measure more eminently calculated than all others to promote the true ends of the union, it was that of the bill for bringing into this country ten thousand of the Irish militia, because it would

transfer men from their home when heated by whiskey, and prejudiced by local ignorance and bad connexions: they would have an opportunity of witnessing in this country the happy effects of sobriety, industry, and subordination to the laws; and they would carry back with them to their own country new ideas and new habits, tending more than any thing else to promote the intercourse and the attachment so desirable between the countries, and ultimately to render the inhabitants of both as one people.

Sir John Wrottesley opposed the bill, principally on the same ground with Col. Craufurd, whose observations upon the state of the public force he fully adopted; and from which he argued, that the present force of the country, in infantry of the line, did not exceed 20,000 men; and notwithstanding the boastful exultation of the right hon. Gentleman, of the formidable state of our public force, he charged his Majesty's Ministers with the grossest inattention and lassitude towards our foreign possessions. For, loudly as the right hon. Gentleman had exulted in the successes of our arms in India, he seemed to forget that the almost defenceless state of our West India possessions, rendered our security in that important quarter extremely problematical; while, by the grossest inattention to our concerns in Africa, and notwithstanding the boasted possession of 1800 ships for our general defence, the enemy had been suffered to wrest from us our most important possession in that quarter of the globe. Towards our possessions in Ceylon, their negligence had been equally reprehensible, nor was it at all certain that the island remained at this hour in our possession; and with reference to our recent successes in India, which had been so much the subject of exultation, it was yet to be considered whether those successes were really grounds for triumph. At all events, they were purchased at an expence of blood and of brave men, which increased the necessity of recruiting our forces in that country by new drains upon the population of this; and the more our territories were extended, the greater would be that necessity at a time when our situation at home rendered it the more embarrassing; while the more extensive our new acquisitions, the more difficult their defence, and consequently the more uncertain must be the permanence of our tenure. The hon. Baronet then adverting to the situation of our home affairs, observed, that through the incompetence of his Majesty's Ministers we were reduced to a dilemma unparalleled in the history of any nation. We were driven

driven by his Majesty's Ministers out of a peace which they made, and did not know how to keep, but which they acknowledged to be untenable, into a war which they knew not how to conduct, in which we were left without an ally in the world. We were carrying on that war by the most ruinous and inefficacious system on earth—that of a blockade; in which we were wearing out our navy, and exhausting the spirits, the patience, the vigour of our men, and the treasure of our country; and now, finding the raising of even the militia by ballot no longer practicable, it was proposed to resort to bounties upon a reduced scale, which, even at double the rate, had been found ineffectual. Such a system he considered as inevitably ruinous to all means of defence, and thought it absolutely necessary to proceed immediately to some active operation, and to strike some blow which might at once give activity to the native gallantry of our troops and seamen, instead of exhausting their hopes and sinking their spirits in a tardy and inactive vigilance upon the preparatory operations of the enemy. He would call upon Ministers in the language of a brave and experienced statesman of former times—“*Si flas, ingredere; si ingredaris, curri; si curris, advola.*”

Sir W. Erskine observed, that while Gentlemen maintained that nothing had been done for the defence and security of the country, he should be glad to hear from those who entertained that opinion, what wiser and more effectual plan they themselves had in view for the same desirable end. As to the force which was at that moment in activity, he was convinced it was as large and efficient as any that could have been provided; and he had every just ground to believe that not a single man more could have been raised to render the disposable force more numerous. When Gentlemen conceived themselves so very strongly founded in their opinions, was he not, he should ask, as strongly justified in calling for proofs in support of their assertions?

Sir J. Newport declared that in voting for the bill which occupied the attention of the House the preceding evening, he did give that vote on the express understanding that the exchange of the services of the two militias should be reciprocal. He was sorry to observe from the resolutions of a number of Gentlemen of the highest respectability, which had appeared in the public papers of that day, that such a reciprocity of service was not only altogether contrary to their wishes, but that they were determined strenuously to resist any such measure. It gave him the greater concern to find such a resolution

a resolution adopted, as he conceived that this reciprocity of service was essential to the completion of the legislative union. He was free to confess that he was one of those who thought that measure highly eligible for the interests of both countries; but in giving his vote in favour of it he looked forward to a perfect union of interests, of objects, and of strength. In wishing the two countries to be united, he was desirous to see all division of interests destroyed, and if any thing could weaken his hopes of having these expectations fulfilled, it would be the resolutions to which he had alluded. He was the more surprised that considerations of convenience, or inconvenience, should have led to these resolutions, when he reflected that those Noblemen and Gentlemen by whom they were passed possessed a deep and important interest in the prosperity and happiness of Ireland. He hoped that these resolutions would not be adhered to, and he was the more emboldened in entertaining this hope from the last of the resolutions, which seemed to intimate that though those who signed the resolutions would not consent to any measure of reciprocal service introduced in an irregular way, they would not object to it when regularly submitted to the consideration of Parliament, and if Parliament should agree to any act sanctioning such an arrangement. He had already stated to the House the grounds of the vote of the preceding night on a another bill, and if no proportion of the English militia was to be exchanged for the militia who had volunteered their services to this country, he should on a future stage of the same bill feel himself perfectly at liberty to resist its ulterior progress. It was admitted on all hands that Ireland was exposed to peril; and many Members admitted that this peril was imminent in the greatest degree. If any part of the force of that part of the united empire was to be withdrawn, it surely did not require much argument to shew that an equal number of troops, of equal discipline and efficiency, should be afforded. The remnant of the army of reserve could not furnish an equivalent, such as Ireland had a right to expect for the exchange of a considerable body of troops acknowledged on all hands to be efficient in every part of military discipline. But further, Members would keep in view, that while it was proposed to supply the deficiency created by withdrawing a certain number of troops, to raise an additional number of ten thousand militia, a large proportion of new regular levies were to be procured from the same market. He could not view this in any other light than as an attempt to trifle with the

the feelings and temper of the people of Ireland; and, therefore, unless an adequate return was to be made, he should not only feel it his duty to oppose the present bill, but to revoke the vote which he had given in favour of another bill connected with this general subject, in a future stage.

General Maitland thought that an hon. Officer who began the discussion, and an hon. Baronet who spoke last but two, had entered on the consideration of many points which were totally unconnected with the real question before the House. He did not deny their right to allude to these points, but contended that the consideration of them would, consistently with prudence, have been much better deferred to a future opportunity. A great deal had been said about the inefficiency of our regular army: for his own part he perfectly agreed with an hon. Baronet who had spoken lately (*Sir W. Erskine*), that those who were so loud in their objections against the Ministers, for not raising the army beyond what it now was, were bound in consistency to point out some plan by which these deficiencies might be supplied. Till they did submit such a plan, he really could not see what right they had to infer that Ministers had not made every possible exertion for this purpose. When Gentlemen talked so much of the small number of our disposable force, they ought to keep in view the means by which any Administration, with the most strenuous exertions, were able to increase its numbers and efficiency. It was to be considered that the proportion of the population of the country at this moment amenable to actual service was not considerable; that there were circumstances in our general situation which were hostile to the augmentation of our regular regiments; that the progress of wealth and the application of productive labour must indispose the lower orders from entering into a military life. This was an argument which it was very fair to urge, with respect to any supposed deficiencies in our regular force at the present moment. But it was nothing more than just to look at what had been done in former times, and under former Administrations, to increase the regular force of the country. In taking this review, he had no intention to criminate former Ministers for any improper want of vigilance and exertion. But, comparing the exertions made by the late Administration, at the commencement of the late war, when the augmentation of the disposable force was the great object in view, with what had been done by his Majesty's present servants, he had no hesitation in saying, that the objections urged against the present

sent deficiency of our disposable force were altogether unsatisfactory and inconclusive. In making this observation, he begged to say that he alluded not merely to the number of additional men procured, but to the quality and component parts of our regular army. It would not be denied that, in many of the regiments composing the army of reserve, the quality of the men was not so good as could be desired; but at the same time he could not by any means coincide in the general censure passed on the army of reserve by his hon. Friend who opened the discussion. If he had inquired a little more accurately into the subject, he would have found that the inferiority of the present regiments of the army of reserve arose out of arrangements which did his Royal Highness the Commander in Chief the highest honour and credit. The fact was, that his Royal Highness had selected out of the general aggregate of the men raised for the army of reserve about twenty-two thousand men, to be incorporated with second battalions of old regiments. Of the men so selected, he wished the hon. Officer and the House at large to understand, that a finer body of men never was incorporated with the regular army either of this or any country in modern Europe. It was true there were 16 regiments of the army of reserve, the troops of which were of an inferior quality. But the whole number of such troops, according to the latest returns, was not much above six thousand men. It was to be considered also, that such inconveniencies could not be avoided by any possible arrangement for the management of the recruiting service. He could state several instances of a similar deficiency under former Administrations; and while he adverted to them, he meant no charge of criminal negligence. His only view in referring to them was, to shew that the existence of deficiencies was no proof of want of vigilance or activity: during the late war the nominal amount of regiments of the line was a hundred and sixty, but the positive amount of our regular force did not exceed ninety-four thousand. In consequence of the existence of this deficiency, his Royal Highness the Commander in Chief determined on a consolidation of the regiments particularly deficient in their complement of numbers. The mode in which this arrangement was to be carried into effect, consisted in the consolidation of no less than fifty-three regiments, so that the whole number of regiments was reduced to one hundred and six. What was the consequence of this consolidation? Out of the fifty three regiments consolidated, which ought to have amounted to thirty-three

three thousand men, the whole efficient numbers were not greater than seven thousand five hundred. In stating these facts, he did not blame the Government, but only to shew that if, out of so great a proportion of regiments, the trash and dross bore so large a proportion, it was neither fair nor just to attach blame to Ministers for their conduct of the military supplies of the country. It would not be denied, that the augmentation of our disposable force was an object highly desirable; but the only plan which at all seemed to him to come up to the idea of many of those Gentlemen, who were most decided in their opposition to Ministers, would be a plan founded in the utter annihilation of the trade, of the wealth, of the industry of the empire. These observations he had thought it his duty to adduce generally, as to the objections advanced against the present military system. Adverting more particularly to the measure immediately before the House, he had to state, that many of the objections against the acceptance of the offers of the Irish militia regiments, and the augmentation of that species of national force, proceeded on a complete misapprehension. It was urged against the acceptance of these offers, that deliberative powers were inconsistent with the establishment of a regular army. The general truth of the position he did not mean to deny, but he certainly felt it his duty to controvert the application which had been attached to it. It was true in the theory of an army, that deliberative powers were excluded. The officers and men were theoretically excluded from the right either of acting or thinking in their military capacity, beyond what the Commander in Chief thought proper to allow. In particular circumstances of practice, this theory was never attempted to be carried into effect. He might instance many a case where this was the practice of the army, but one or two striking examples would be amply sufficient for his argument. It was in the moment of the most imminent danger, that the theoretical part of the constitution of a regular army was necessarily suspended. When it was determined that a particular place should be carried by storm, it was theoretically above all things necessary, that all deliberative powers in an army should cease. But this was the very crisis when, according to the practice of all regular armies, the power of voluntary determination was allowed. The same thing took place as to the body of the army to be employed in the works at a siege. The hon. General proceeded

to allude next to some arguments calculated to shew the deficiency of our military establishment in the East and West Indies. As to the present situation of St. Domingo, he took on himself to assert, that the number of British troops to be kept up in the West Indies, ought to be less than at any former period. He could hardly conceive it possible to argue, that with relation to other objects in the West Indies, our force was at all inadequate to the accomplishment of every British purpose. The House were aware of the advantage gained in that quarter of the world since the commencement of the war, and he would put it fairly to the candour of any hon. Member, whether advantages of so important a nature had ever been gained within the same period. An hon. Baronet (Sir J. Wrottesley) had taken notice of the capture of a small settlement on the coast of Africa. He was willing to admit, on the authority of the hon. Baronet, for he knew nothing of the matter from any other quarter, that such an advantage had been gained by the enemy, but what did this at all prove as to the general means of our defence both with respect to this country and our foreign possessions? Nothing was more easy than to account for this partial advantage of the enemy. It arose solely from this plain circumstance, which was common in every war, that our settlements on the coast of Africa were the least valuable of our possessions, and occupying the smallest degree of attention, were the most likely to fall into the hands of the enemy, however inconsiderable the force by which they were attacked. The hon. Gentleman next referred to the situation of our affairs in India. He was utterly at a loss to conceive on what possible ground a charge of the insufficiency of our force in India could be brought forward. He needed not to enlarge on the brilliant and important victories obtained by the gallantry of our forces in that quarter of the world. When, however, he stated what a small proportion of European troops were engaged in these services, the House must see that the noble Lord at the head of our Eastern dominions had taken no step which could at all endanger their security. He had to state then, according to the most recent accounts which had reached him, that in all the brilliant engagements which had taken place on the continent of India, not more than five thousand out of twenty-two thousand European troops in our pay had, in any instance, been engaged. He appealed to the House whether there could be a more conclusive proof that any objection
against

against the state of our military defence and state of preparation in India was totally unfounded. The hon. Gentleman concluded by offering a few observations in favour of the bill. His argument on this point was generally that, by the adoption of the measure, ten thousand regular troops would be left disposable for any general purpose.

Mr. Fox began by adverting to the observations which had been made respecting a meeting of those principally concerned in the support of the militia system, and the resolutions which they had entered into on the subject. He expressed his astonishment at the language employed that evening by an hon. Member on the same bench with himself (Sir W. Keene), and another hon. Member behind him (Colonel Hutchinson), as to the motives by which these resolutions were suggested. It seemed to be taken for granted, that mere considerations of inconvenience gave rise to the determination of the very respectable body of individuals to which he had referred. But he begged leave solemnly to protest against any such inference. Was it not possible that the noble and hon. persons who had come to these resolutions did so independent of every idea of individual inconvenience? Was it not possible that their opposition to a measure for the reciprocity of the services of the English and Irish militias was founded on strict constitutional principles, and in perfect conformity to the fundamental laws of the militia system? Were the Noblemen and Gentlemen of England to bear the insinuation cast out against them, that they refused to volunteer the services of the militia regiments which they commanded, because they were unwilling to forego the pleasures of their horses and their hounds? Was it necessary for him to mention the names of those who had signed the resolutions, to shew that such an idea was not to be entertained for a single moment? Enough indeed had been said by the hon. Gentlemen who had attributed the resolutions to any idea of inconvenience, to shew that such a supposition was wholly groundless. It had been admitted that the noble and hon. persons who signed the resolutions, possessed a very great interest in the safety of Ireland. From that part of the empire they derived the greatest part of their influence, as well as the most important source of their property. Was it to be conceived then, that in refusing the offers of the militia of England to serve in Ireland, they were actuated by any considerations of personal inconvenience? No man could seriously hold such an opinion. He was confident that every man

who reflected on the subject must be forced to admit, that those by whom the resolutions were signed had every motive to provide for the security of Ireland, not merely from considerations of interest, but from well digested views of the value of Ireland as a material and essential part of the British empire. He commended the resolutions entered into on this broad constitutional principle, and he should certainly concur in resisting any measure by which the principles of the militia establishment might be violated without full and fair discussion. Gentlemen who supported the propriety of accepting the offers of the Irish militia, proceeded on the principle that the services of the militia of both countries were to be reciprocally exchanged. This was, however, an opinion assumed without the slightest evidence. This was a question which had never at all come under any general parliamentary consideration. The question was one of the highest importance; but it was not to be disposed of in the way for which these Gentlemen were so anxious to contend. It was not by the bill now before the House that it was to be determined. If the general question of the policy and expediency of the reciprocal services of the two militias was to be brought forward, let it be fully, fairly, and impartially considered; but let it not be taken for granted that any such understanding of the principles of the union as that contended for does at all exist. An hon. Member (Colonel Hutchinson) had talked a good deal of the beneficial consequences which would result from the introduction of the Irish militia into this country, and the new habits and opinions which such a measure would inspire. He could not help thinking this rather a romantic view of the subject, and he had never heard it urged as one of the benefits which would result from the union. Hitherto, indeed, he had never heard of any benefit resulting from the union, with the exception of this solitary one, that Ireland had been deprived of her local Legislature. He was ready to admit that he did not think many of the acts of that Legislature very laudable; but he must in candour be permitted to say, that hitherto the measure of the union had not received a fair trial. Those who introduced the measure into this House, had held out a prospect to Gentlemen here, and more circuitously to the Members of the Parliament of Ireland, that the measure of union would be incomplete, independent of ulterior arrangements: Respecting the measure itself, he wished not now to enlarge, as he had not attended the discussion which it had created. He would however repeat, that

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it had not received a fair trial. He must be permitted also to add, that in his opinion the union of this country with Ireland was a measure practically impossible. Ireland was a country too extensive to admit of such a union, and the system of representation necessary to carry it into effect must be attended with insurmountable difficulties. It was contrary to the nature of things to expect any important benefits from it. As far as assimilation of manners and an increase of mutual confidence were concerned, he might put it to the candour of any Gentleman to declare, whether any advantage had hitherto been attained either to Ireland or the empire at large. Under the present circumstances of the Government of Ireland, it was indeed utterly impossible that any confidence or union of sentiment could exist; when the Lord Chancellor of Ireland took on himself to insult the feelings of three-fourths of the people, by telling them that they could not be good subjects to their King without violating their duty to the God whom they adored; that they could not be faithful to the British constitution without renouncing the religion they professed. The tranquillity of Ireland, therefore, under such a Government, could only depend on the same measures which now existed in that country, and by the protraction of the same measures of coercion which Ministers themselves had called for as applicable to the circumstances of that part of the empire.—Having finished these general observations, Mr. Fox proceeded to the more direct consideration of the bill. After adverting to the fallacy of an argument, that there was no distinction betwixt a body of Irish fencibles and Irish militia, he stated his views of these general offers of extension of services. It was clear that such offers of extended service were obtained by means which could not be justified on constitutional principles. It had been very properly objected to this measure, that it encouraged the practice of deliberation in military bodies, which was allowed on all hands to be inexpedient and impolitic. But his hon. Friend (General Maitland) had endeavoured to do away this objection by a sort of argument which he could not help considering a little extraordinary. He had stated that, in certain cases, particularly on occasions when some hazardous enterprise was to be attempted, the right of deliberation was allowed among soldiers. This was, to be sure, a very applicable argument! In the case of the militia, you have no right to call for the extension of their services. You cannot compel them to go beyond the limits of their original agreement.

But

But though possessing no power of control or compulsion, you cajole, you cajole, and by means of the most extraordinary kind; you prevail on them to extend the limits of their services. In the other case of regular soldiers, every man, whether a volunteer or not, is bound to go on whatever duty is prescribed to him, however difficult. When an enterprise of difficulty and danger is to be undertaken, the motives of honour and reward are held forth to animate the voluntary offers of individuals of more courageous and determined spirit. But what analogy was there, he desired to ask, betwixt such an offer and the offer of the militia regiments of Ireland to extend their services to this country? No Gentleman would surely pretend that, to volunteer their service to this country under the present circumstances of the empire, was the part either of honour or of danger. If any part of the empire was exposed to danger, surely this country was not in so perilous a state as Ireland. His hon. Friend had alluded to the exertions made by the present servants of the Crown during the last year, and had referred to the successes which had crowned our arms, as a proof of their not being deficient in energy. This was a species of argument which was really good for nothing, as applicable to a general conclusion. He did not profess to be intimately acquainted with dates, but he would refer to the year 1780, when unfortunately we commenced hostilities with the Dutch Republic. In that year we made numerous conquests from the Dutch, both in the West and East Indies. We got possession of St. Eustatius and Demerara, with other settlements, which he needed not at the moment enumerate. But of what avail were these conquests? The nature of the peace afterwards concluded, was the best answer to this question. He had only to desire, that the same principle should be applied to the conquests made since the commencement of the present war, on which too much stress had been laid by his hon. Friend. As to our successes in the East Indies, he begged leave to make a few observations. That the victories, of which recent accounts had been received, were in themselves highly brilliant, he was far from wishing to deny. What their consequence might be, or how far the destruction of the power of the Mahrattas in India was a politic or expedient measure, he begged the House to understand that at present he offered no opinion. He reserved himself on these points till the House was in possession of fuller information. He however agreed with the arguments of a worthy

Baronet

Baronet (Sir J. Wrottesley) on this subject, that the state of our possessions in India was a material point to be considered when estimating the amount of our military establishments. It was quite clear, whether the war in India was protracted, or whether our empire in Hindostan was extended, there would be an equal necessity for reinforcements from this country. He therefore was surprised at the language held by his hon. Friend on this subject. The hon. Member went on to animadvert on the mode in which the bill was introduced. He observed, that till a substitute was found for the militia who were to volunteer their services to this country, the present measure could not be entertained. But Ministers had thought proper to proceed on another principle; and before they had made the least provision for supplying the deficiency created by the voluntary offers of extended service, they hurried on the discussion of the acceptance of those offers. But here they justified themselves on the ground that it was necessary to provide for any sudden emergency of invasion. This really was a most singular mode of proceeding. Were Ministers to be informed, that if England were invaded, and the preparations against Ireland defeated, that there were thirty thousand regular troops whose services could be immediately ordered to this country? It would not be denied that the services of these troops were equal to the services of the Irish militia, without going so far as to say that they were much superior. If this was the case, he put it to the common sense of the House whether, at least at the present moment, the measure was at all necessary? He again conjured the House not to listen to the idea of reciprocal service in the militia, till a solemn decision of the Legislature was obtained. It was singular that 3, 4, and even 8 months had elapsed since some of these offers had been made; but now, for the first time, were they publicly brought forward. He deprecated any attempt to entrap the House in their decision on the general principle, and therefore would resist the partial measure calculated to interfere with a general principle. In conclusion, the hon. Member noticed the imbecility of the views, plans, and preparations of Ministers. He contended that they could neither maintain peace, nor put the country in an attitude for war. He declared, that, to such a situation was the country reduced, that all the abilities of the country were inadequate to frame measures to bring to a fortunate issue a war which, by wisdom and vigour, might have been avoided. He adverted to the inability of Ministers. He had

had not been much in the habits of enlarging on their want of ability, but this was a point on which they seemed very touchy on all occasions. This irritability put him in mind of the conduct of Grildrig at the court of the King of Brobdingnag. The little gentleman felt himself rather considered in a contemptuous light by the mighty courtiers, by whom he was surrounded. He, however, determined to get the better of them by stratagem. He accordingly informed his Majesty, that though small in stature, he was able in his own country to do as much mischief as the largest of all his mighty courtiers—(a loud laugh). Mr. Fox declared that he should vote against the bill.

Mr. W. Keene explained, as did Sir John Newport, both of whom professed the highest respect for the individuals of whom the meeting alluded to by the hon. Member consisted.

Col. Craufurd also explained.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* began by stating that the hon. Gentleman on the opposite side had thought proper to introduce, upon this occasion, a variety of topics, but had bestowed very little of his attention upon the subject immediately before the House. The hon. Gentleman had asserted, in common with others who supported his opinion, that Ministers had entirely devoted their consideration to the militia and volunteers, but overlooked the means of augmenting the regular troops; but what was the fact? why, that his right hon. Friend (Mr. Yorke) had, at the time that he proposed the measure now under discussion, accompanied the proposition with a statement of another part of the plan of Government, which was to make a farther increase of 18,000 men to our regular disposable force, which force it was peculiarly the purpose of this bill to strengthen. In adverting to the union with Ireland, the hon. Member had asserted, that the only benefit which seemed to result to Ireland from that measure was the destruction of its Legislature; but without entering particularly into the nature of that remark, he would take upon himself to say, that the most important advantages had arisen to that country. Upon the authority of persons competent to speak with respect to the situation of Ireland, he was happy in being enabled to state, that the present improved circumstances of that country were to be ascribed to the union, and that since that event a most material and necessary change had taken place in the disposition, feelings, and inclination of the Irish people. They were much more disposed towards this part of the united kingdom, much more attached

attached to their Sovereign and their English fellow subjects.— [Here a question was asked across the table, why enact martial law, and suspend the habeas corpus act?]—Upon these measures the right hon. Gentleman observed that the House had already decided; and at the time they were adopted, he added; that the fullest acknowledgment was made of the general good disposition of the people of Ireland, but yet that peculiar circumstances called for and justified their adoption.—With the principle that a proceeding such as that to which the bill before the House referred, should not be taken but under the pressure of an overruling necessity, or from a forcible suggestion of policy, he most perfectly agreed, and he maintained that there existed much stronger grounds to justify this bill at present than did offer in the year 1799, when a similar course was resorted to. This he endeavoured to shew by a comparison of the circumstances connected with both periods—and followed this comparison by an expression of his wish that some candour should be shewn towards this and the other acts of Ministers, by those who were the principal advisers and actors in cases which were so analogous. In reply to an expression manifested by an hon. Gentleman on the other side with respect to the security of Ireland, he begged to say that it formed no part of the plans of Ministers, and particularly not of the policy of this measure, to weaken in any degree the defence of Ireland. On the contrary, it was naturally calculated, upon a fair consideration of the whole of the project, to augment its security, for in lieu of the militia which might be transferred from Ireland, no man could entertain a doubt that, should the State of this country admit of it and that of Ireland require it, his Majesty would substitute 10,000 of the regular army. After glancing at the additional facilities which the proposed transfer of this body of the Irish militia would give to the dispositions of our regular army in any necessary service out of this country, the right honourable Gentleman took notice of the system pursued by the right honourable Gentleman (Mr. Windham) and his Friend. Upon every proposition which Ministers submitted for the internal defence of the country, they commented with considerable severity, principally on the alleged ground that our disposable force was neglected; and yet the measure now before the House, the obvious tendency of which was to augment our disposable force, and which so far fell in with their own views, experienced the same fate—the same objections and.

spirit of opposition, although from its nature it certainly was that proceeding in which, from the sentiments uniformly expressed by the right hon. Gentleman heretofore, Ministers were encouraged to look for his support; but whatever the right hon. Gentleman and his friends might pronounce upon this measure, it did appear to Ministers to be the best course to pursue, in order to attain, with the greatest expedition and at the least expence, the means of augmenting our disposable force. In what way and to what amount it might be advisable to make use of that force hereafter, was a point that must depend upon circumstances that it would be fruitless to anticipate. The hon. Gentleman (Mr Fox) had asserted, that Ministers had as yet done nothing to bring the war to a conclusion, and he had also taken this opportunity of repeating that which he seldom missed an occasion to urge, namely, to charge the war upon his Majesty's Ministers. Into that question he would not then enter. The House and the public had already pronounced their verdict upon it, and he was convinced that the people held no opinion stronger than this, that this is a war of indispensable necessity. The charge of forbearing too long to engage in it, would not, he was sure, be dwelt on by any man who considered dispassionately the important effects of that forbearance—who valued the advantage of that national unanimity which now prevailed. He verily believed that such was the sentiment of the country upon this subject that, were the honourable Gentleman to poll the people, he would be left in the smallest minority in which a person of his great weight and importance had ever found himself; and he had very little apprehension that the distinguished eloquence of the hon. Gentleman, or the talents or influence of the few who thought with him, would ever be sufficient to shake the well founded opinion of the public. As to the hon. Gentleman's idea, that the system acted upon by Ministers had no tendency towards producing a peace, he would ask, after the undisguised avowal, and obvious desire of the enemy was known to be the overthrow of the independence of this country, whether a better cause could be devised than one which, by effectually providing for our defence, must assure the enemy that his object was utterly impracticable, that ruin must be the consequence of the attempt; while it was to be considered, that if after his ostentatious advances, the enemy should abandon the attempt, ~~he~~ must attend his councils; and that if after attempting this plan it should fail, as it indubitably would, his ~~name~~ ~~would~~ be

be still more, and our glory would be augmented. He would put it to the candour of the House, whether that plan of policy was not the most eligible, which, by convincing the enemy that his efforts must prove abortive, that the ends he had in view were unattainable, would urge him at length to feel that the prosecution of the war was absurd. The system of Ministers the right hon. Gentleman therefore thought the most effectual towards accelerating its conclusion; but the provision of means for our home defence, and to defeat any attack of the enemy upon us, was not the only object which occupied the attention of Government in the conduct of the war, for he could say, with the most perfect confidence, that in no former war had there been, in the first year of its commencement, such victories obtained, and such important acquisitions made, as had distinguished the period which had elapsed since the declaration of hostilities. The conquests we had made in the West Indies would not, he hoped, be underrated, because they were not accompanied by bloodshed. It could not be pretended that those captures were not entitled to praise, because the resistance of the enemy was not material, for the fact was, that that resistance was prevented by a measure of precaution taken in due time. He had no hesitation to state, that in the course of our negotiation with the French Government, orders were sent out to our commanders in the West Indies to intercept any supplies of troops which might be dispatched to any of the enemy's settlements, and that in the event of the renewal of the war, St. Lucia, Tobago, &c. should be immediately attacked. The right hon. Gentleman took notice of the gallant attack upon St. Lucia, and dwelt upon the late splendid achievements in the East Indies. The merit belonging to the conduct of the latter, however, he was far from insinuating that Ministers had any right to arrogate; it belonged to that illustrious personage Lord Wellesley, and the officers under his command. He alluded to it to shew that the statement was unfounded, that the present was a war not distinguished by any military exploit, by any action that could do honour to the British arms, that could animate the heart or gratify the pride of a British soldier. Those achievements, he was confident, would be found to operate powerfully upon the minds of Englishmen, and that they contained the elements of future glory. These considerations, combined with a knowledge of the character and number of our public force, left him no room to doubt as to the issue of the contest in which we are engaged.

engaged. This force, he contended, was as numerous as it would be consistent with the feelings, habits, and various pursuits of our population to employ. We had, in fact, at present more soldiers than any power in Europe, far indeed out-numbering the whole force of France. Gentlemen were not to suppose that he meant to compare our volunteers with veteran troops who had seen service. He only alluded to the number of our armed defenders, and he entertained no doubt of their efficiency. From the papers on the table, it appeared that we had in Great Britain and Ireland 184,000 regulars and militia, and also 400,000 volunteers, all of whom, with the exception of about from 15 to 20,000 men, were armed with firelocks. Our force therefore all together amounted to 584,000 men for the united kingdom. He would appeal to any candid man, whether it could be said, that at the commencement of the war it would have been thought possible to collect, in so short a period as has since elapsed, such a numerous and efficient force. The hon. Gentleman on the opposite bench had said, that Ministers were inadequate to preserve peace or to prosecute the war. Had they indeed followed the advice which that hon. Gentleman had given previous to the commencement of hostilities, to reduce our regular force, &c. the country would have been really put in a state very unfit to meet the renewal of the war; but he rejoiced to think that Parliament and Ministers had disregarded the advice of the hon. Gentleman, and in so doing he had the happiness of being supported by the present right hon. Friend (Mr. Windham) of the hon. Gentleman. The force was thus kept up in opposition to the opinion of the hon. Gentleman, not with a view to prepare for war, but in order to maintain a peace establishment, which, although treble more than had existed at any former period, was yet such as the circumstances of the times called for. It was conceived the best mode to pursue for preserving peace, to hold the country in a state ready to meet the exigency of war, and the event had justified that policy. Referring to some statements made in the course of the debate, by the opponents of the bill, the right hon. Gentleman stated that there were at present 44,896 regular infantry in Great Britain, although it was said that there were only 20,000, and that there were 17,000 regular cavalry in Great Britain and Ireland, (in this number he could not say whether officers were included,) although gentlemen seemed to argue as if the cavalry did not exceed 10,000. He adverted to the conduct of the late Administration

administration during the progress of the last war, and animadverted upon the course they pursued for the defence of the country, &c. Their activity and wisdom he was ever ready to acknowledge; but he begged to observe as to some of the measures they adopted—1st, the plan as to the provisional cavalry was known to have completely failed; 2dly, the quotas proposed to be raised for the increase of the army and navy did not produce one-twelfth of the number calculated upon; 3dly, the militia were raised by supplementary to 92,000 men, and yet the right hon. Gentleman on the lower bench, who was then a minister, now strongly objects to the increase of the militia, although they do not exceed 70,000. The fourth instance he had to allude to was the project of raising men for rank—a project which the right hon. Gentleman himself at present so loudly condemned—a project which produced forty-seven battalions, from the whole of which not more than 7,500 men could be procured, who were engrafted on the old established regiments. The officers of those battalions were put on half-pay, and had it not been for the judgment of his Royal Highness the Commander in Chief, who contrived to find employment for them, those officers, who amounted to no less than 2000, might have remained a dead weight upon the country. Those different measures of the late Administration he mentioned only with a view to ask from them, who must recollect such scenes as they themselves were the principal actors, some indulgence and consideration for their successors in power, who had so much greater difficulties to encounter in arranging the military defence of the country, and who had notwithstanding succeeded in collecting and arraying an army little short of that which the country possessed at the very highest period of preparation in the course of the last war, and much beyond that which was in arms in the year 1798, peculiar as the state of the empire in domestic and foreign concerns then was. He referred to those points and introduced this comparison merely to shew that there was no failure of exertion on the part of the present Government, which he thought would be still more obvious, if Gentlemen would consider that, independently of the manner in which Government had directed the zeal and patriotism of the people for the internal defence of the country, exclusive of the number of volunteers collected and disciplined, not less than two hundred thousand men had been raised for the army and navy within the space of one year. The right hon. Gentleman

man concluded with admitting that the bill before the House was not free from objections; but yet he felt that these objections were not so strong as to dissuade him from supporting a measure which promised to produce such salutary effects.

Mr. Fox rose to explain, not, he observed, what he had said that night, but what he had said above eighteen months ago. The reduction of the army, which he then recommended, was certainly not the result of an expectation, or as the mode for preparing for war. The right hon. Gentleman, he admitted, had over-reached him in stating that the peace which then existed was likely to last.

Mr. Francis—I rise, Sir, for the single purpose of not suffering to pass without notice a declaration made by his Majesty's Chancellor of the Exchequer, the most extraordinary, the most unadvised on his part, considering his station and authority in this House, and the least applicable to the subject in debate, that I ever was witness to in the many years in which I have sat in Parliament. The general question between him and those who differ from him this night is, first, whether the measures of Government in preparing for a war with France which they ought to have foreseen, were such as entitled them to expect success in the prosecution of it; and then whether the plan, the direction, and the operations of the war have been such as, by shewing that we possessed the force and the means of attacking the enemy with success, might raise our military reputation to a level with the efforts made by the country to furnish Ministers with a power sufficient for any enterprize, and thereby accelerate the termination of the war by a safe and honourable peace? On these questions, the right hon. Gentleman assumes the affirmative. But how does he prove it? Why, Sir, when he ought to tell us in what manner he has prepared to attack France, how he proposes to conduct the war in Europe, what rational prospect he has of reducing a most formidable enemy, who threatens us with a contest for our existence, to reasonable terms, or of bringing the war to an early and safe conclusion; instead of answering these obvious questions, he carries us to the other side of the globe, that is, as far as he can from the home question, and assures us that, by the latest advices from India, many brilliant, splendid, and radiant victories have been obtained over the Mahrattas. Be it so. What connection is there between those events and the present war in Europe? Can any thing be conceived more extravagant and absurd than, when the question is, by what means

means you can attack or repel the most formidable military power that ever existed in Europe; to answer it by saying that a British army has completely defeated an Indian army in the neighbourhood of Delhi? But perhaps the right hon. Gentleman has some personal share in these transactions, and a right to some part of the merit and the honour of the success. Then he must have given the orders which produced the war. In that case the war against the Mahrattas must have originated in England. No such thing. He knows literally nothing of it, but what he has been able to pick up from a few straggling gazettes, printed at Madras, and copied from others printed at Calcutta, which by mere accident have found their way to England, and a letter from Bombay. From the fountain head he has heard nothing. From Lord Wellesley, whose conduct he extols, he never has received a single line of information on the subject. I have said that such declarations, without knowledge, particularly in a person in his station, are very unadvised, and liable to serious objections. While the very question of the wisdom, the policy, the right and the justice of this war is depending, about all which his Majesty's Ministers are just as much in the dark as I am; while Parliament is waiting with anxiety for the very materials, by which alone their judgment on the whole merits of the war can be determined, and when perhaps this House, upon receiving that complete information, if ever it should come, which we ought to have received long ago, may be obliged to condemn the whole transaction; the right hon. Gentleman invades and prejudices that question, which ought to have been left untouched, as I have always most studiously and cautiously left it, and open to the free and unbiassed examination of Parliament. To that examination, sooner or later, it must be submitted. But the right hon. Gentleman, if I understand him right, professes to expect that these successes in India will have some favourable effect upon our military or political operations in Europe, and possibly contribute to accelerate the termination of the war. If he does not think so, his mention of those events is nothing to the present purpose. Now, Sir, I am of opinion that, if they have any effect at all, which I very much doubt, it will be to our disadvantage, I mean as to war and peace in Europe; because it will furnish Bonaparte with an argument, which the neutral powers in all appearance will be ready enough to listen to. They have hitherto shewn no sign of a disposition to take part with us against France, or even to assist us with their mediation.

diation. But when we ourselves tell them, in a triumphant tone, that our armies have obtained victories in India, from which we expect to become masters of that empire, what will they conclude, but that the English are governed by the same spirit of insatiable avarice and ambition with which we reproach Bonaparte; that they have no interest in our quarrel but to see it continued; and that the rest of the world has no chance of peace, of happiness, or of safety, but in the weakness to which the dangerous power both of France and England may finally be reduced by the continuance of the present war?

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* explained, that he alluded to the late events in India, only as military achievements.

Dr. Laurence reviewed the arguments of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, and the conduct of his Majesty's Ministers both before and since the commencement of hostilities. He vindicated the parliamentary conduct of his right hon. Friend, and insisted that the wisdom of his observations was fully established by the conduct of his Majesty's Ministers in adopting them, though they were not disposed to acknowledge the obligation at the same time that they took the benefit of them. The Learned Gentleman contended, that the militia of Ireland were sworn particularly for the defence of that country, and could not without a violation of faith be brought from it. He then adverted to the capture of the French islands, insisting that there had been no display of gallantry on the occasion, except in the trifling operation at St. Lucia, because there had been no force there capable of resistance; and noticed the inutility of such conquests, which would be given up at the conclusion of a peace, as had been done in the case of Demerara, Essequibo, &c. after many millions of English capital should be expended in improving. In taking this view of the case, the Learned Member was proceeding to comment on some observations that had fallen on a former occasion from an hon. General opposite (General Maitland), respecting the policy of taking possession of the enemy's colonial territories at the commencement of a war, though it should be only to keep possession of them pending hostilities, when he was called to order by

General Maitland, who appealed to the candour and feelings of the House, whether it was regular to advert to what had fallen from a Member on a former occasion, when that Member would be, by the forms of the House, precluded from replying?

AP.

Mr. Fox agreed with his honourable Friend, that it was not ~~entirely~~ orderly.

Dr. Lanning continued, and insisted that no benefit was to be derived from the possession of the islands, if after much British capital should be expended on them they were to be given up in the end. The learned Gentleman observed upon the different constitutions of the militia force of Ireland and of Great Britain, and concluded by justifying the resolutions to which the hon. Baronet (Sir John Newport) had alluded, and assuring the hon. Member that any hopes of reciprocal service which he might have conceived from the last resolution, were not well founded.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in explanation, stated, that provisional orders had been sent out to the West Indies in the early part of March, founded on information that the enemy meant to reinforce one or two islands, to prevent the landing of troops in those islands, and that the orders for the actual commencement of hostilities had been sent out on the 16th of May, the day of his Majesty's Message communicating the result of the negotiation.

Mr. Serjeant Best defended the conduct of his Majesty's Ministers; he could not perceive what inference was to be drawn, with respect to the question before the House, from the considerations that had been urged relative to the commencement and prosecution of the war. If the war had not been commenced, the House would, perhaps, not have been at this time deliberating as a Parliament, and he insisted that the question concerning the war had been sanctioned by the authority of the Legislature, and the approbation of the public. He denied the position that no glory had been acquired in the present war. Was it no glory, he asked, that whilst the Continent was crouching beneath the power of France, this country had been enabled to withstand the gigantic efforts made by its inveterate foe, and aimed at its existence? Was it no glory that in the second year of the war, they were considering a measure which was to enable us to augment our disposable force, for the purpose of adopting a system of attack against our enemies? Was it a fault of his Majesty's Government that valuable possessions had been acquired without bloodshed? The question was not now to withdraw any of the force from Ireland, but to augment the disposable force in the empire. He contended, that the militia might as constitutionally be sent from Ireland to Great Britain, inasmuch as the union made both countries one kingdom, and the service of the militia ought to be co-extensive with the limits

of the kingdom. The English and Scotch militia might be removed as far from home to the distant parts of Great Britain as if sent to Ireland; and therefore the argument of convenience fell to the ground. It would, however, not be consistent with good faith to compel their services, but that breach of faith was done away by the voluntary offers which had been made. The learned Member thought that this question ought not to be discussed, because, with whatever warmth it might be treated, it would be a cold answer to the zeal and spirit of the gentlemen who had made the offers; and concluded with stating it to be his opinion, that the militia, as being more characterised by the habits of common life than any other species of military force, ought to be interchanged in the different parts of the empire, for the purpose of promoting the assimilation of manners and habits in the two countries, which would most speedily carry the union into complete effect.

Mr. Johnstone denied, as had formerly been stated, that the war was approved of by the country at large. The unanimity that prevailed arose from very different circumstances. The moment the war was declared, we were threatened with invasion, which united the whole country independently of any consideration of the necessity or expediency of the war. It was a war, he maintained, that could end only in a peace such as was made at Amiens. Could any acquisitions, he asked, we had made in the West Indies, contribute in the smallest degree to force the French to a peace? The Gentlemen on the opposite bench, however, had taken merit to themselves for sending orders to the West Indies, by which we had gained some distant and temporary advantages there. But if this was so much calculated to do them credit, why did they not issue similar orders to the East Indies, and thus prevent the expedition of Admiral Linois, which certainly would have been of much more importance to this country? The hon. Gentleman concluded by giving his negative to the Speaker's leaving the chair.

Lord Castlereagh replied to the observations of Mr. Johnstone, respecting the orders sent out to the East and West Indies, and shewed, from the different circumstances attending the two situations, why corresponding orders were not sent. It was supposed that the reinforcements of troops prepared in France were intended for the garrisons in the West Indies, and the order was consequently sent. Orders were sent to the East to take all proper measures of defence, and, indeed, a general order

order was issued to all the settlements immediately after the rupture: but no order could, from the nature of the case, be sent to the East-Indies analogous to what was sent to the West.

Mr. *Kinsaid* rose to take notice of what had fallen from an hon. Member who had said, that if we gained no glory in the war, we should shame the French. He did not exactly understand this principle. His object, in this war, was to bring it to a speedy and effectual termination; not to remain in a miserable state of siege, and be daily putting new settlers on our exertions. This measure was to be accompanied with another, to increase the army by 18,000 men. But how? To be raised here, and in Ireland; and yet by this measure Ministers set up a new competition in the raising this new militia.

Colonel Vereker thought it unfair to take away the Irish militia for English service, and then oblige Ireland to raise so many more to make up the deficiency; the expence of them being defrayed by the bounties paid by the counties in Ireland, might thus be amazingly increased.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* observed that it was the intention of Government to introduce a clause to charge the expences of the bounty on the united kingdom.

Colonel Hutchinson expressed much satisfaction at the resolutions of the Lords Lieutenants, &c. on the subject of the militia, as they did not go to preclude any new system of arrangement. He should support the bill, because he wished to support the Executive Power at the present moment. He hoped for a bill to allow the interchange of the militia of both countries. In England, from the palace to the cottage, there was a greater ignorance of the true state of Ireland, than in any other country with which we professed to be acquainted, upon the face of the globe. He hoped to see the English gentry and persons of other classes mixing with the people of Ireland, and then they would return here advocates for the cause of Ireland, so that no Ministers would be able to resist the voice of truth. English Members would then be induced to pay more attention to Irish questions than at present they are able to do, from ignorance of the state of the country. He allowed this measure to be founded on a violation of the militia principle, but he took into consideration the attendant circumstances. Ministers had, however, much depressed his feelings, when they appeared desirous of withdrawing from the original grounds on which they supported the measure. Here was a bill to bring over 20,000 men from Ireland, but he was

astonished to hear that they had no idea of an interchange. They would then take away the country gentlemen of Ireland, and make no kind of return for it. He was sorry to see the great object thus weakened. But let it not be thought that Ireland, because she exhibits this instance of her patriotism, is really satisfied with what has been done since the union. The Irish thought they had the authority of the King, by his royal message originating the union, and indeed that of Parliament too, for expecting some further measures. After the solemn pledges they had received, he would ask what had been done for them? But while the Irish felt and expressed their dissatisfaction, they would stand by England to the last. They would never submit to a foreign force, or yield to the haughty despot now hovering on our coasts. They would die with England if necessary, or share her laurels. But let not this be confounded with an idea of their being satisfied with their condition.

Lord De Blaquiere understood that the principle of the Secretary of State was, that of creating a larger disposable force, and therefore, because he was friendly to the principle, he should vote against the motion which proposed to add to a limited force a number so disproportionate to the regular force. The Irish militia was formed by bounty, not by ballot, and was composed of the very men who would otherwise be procured for the regular service. The militia was the very force least necessary to increase. He was desirous of an interchange of the respective militias; but if not, he thought these new militia might be raised on terms of service for both islands, and in separate regiments.

Mr. Alexander replied to some of the observations of *Col. Hutchinson*, and censured the impropriety of adverting to irritating language to the union. He then noticed the conduct of two other right hon. Gentlemen (*Mr. Fox* and *Mr. Windham*), and their strange connexion in opposition to Ministers. He heard continual outcries of the incapacity of Ministers; but those Gentlemen's wisdom seemed to consist in a perfect change, and their integrity in a mutual forgiveness, accompanied by a confession of having been in the wrong before. As to what had been said about the union, Gentlemen who supported it had feelings of honour as high as any others, and nothing but disunion could be the consequence to the country, whose cause we ought to support, by the provocation of such subjects. He therefore condemned the introduction unnecessarily of such topics in discussion.

Mr. Windham defended the conduct of the noble Lord
(*De*

(De Blaquier), who had been long in a military life, and whose opinion was worth something on this subject, because he knew something about it. Much the greater part of what fell from the last hon. Gentleman that spoke, he could not reply to, because he did not understand it. He had heard a great many remarks on conduct and character, and so on; and many complaints had been made about charges of the incapacity of Ministers. They thought they heard these charges in every thing that was said of them. They were something like a man who had a favourite tune, and always began to sing it when he heard a drum beat. So many topics had been introduced into the debate, that he should, on some future opportunity, speak at more length on several points.

Sir William Elford said a few words against the bill.

Mr. Secretary Yorke explained that the bounties were to be paid out of the Treasury.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer observed, that what was before the union a charge on the public, would now go to the account of the united kingdom.

On the question being put, the numbers were

Ayes - - 94

Noes - - 37—Majority 57.

The bill was committed, and the report ordered to be received the next day.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer gave notice of his intention to move on Friday for taking into consideration parts of the petitions from Suffolk and Norfolk, respecting imports and exports.

The Irish linen manufactory bill was postponed till Friday, after some conversation between Mr. Corry and Mr. Foster.

Adjourned at one o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

THURSDAY, APRIL 12.

Counsel was farther heard for the appellants in the case from the Court of Chancery, *Richardson v. the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge*. The farther consideration was deferred till Thursday next.

On the motion of Lord Killenborough, the bill for enforcing the execution of the canons of the church, relative to the age of priests and deacons, was postponed till the next day.

The

The *Earl of Suffolk* stated, that he had a motion of considerable importance to submit to the consideration of their Lordships, which, if agreeable to Ministers, he was then ready to enter into. If, however, they rather wished that it should lie over till the next day, he had no objection to that delay, and should therefore give notice of his intention then to bring it forward. The motion which he should have the honour to make, concerned the war in which we were engaged in India, and as to the causes for the origin of which, notwithstanding a positive enactment of the Legislature to that effect, no information had been afforded to Parliament.

Lord Hawkebury said, that it was not common to bring forward any motion of importance without a previous notice. There was a measure of great moment, and which had occupied a considerable portion of their Lordships' time, already before the House for that night; and the noble and learned Lord (Ellenborough) had fixed for the next day a business also of considerable importance. If, therefore, the noble Earl did not attach more than ordinary interest to his intended motion, he submitted the propriety of giving notice of it for some future day.

The *Earl of Suffolk* considered the motion which he had to propose as of the highest consequence. It might easily be discussed, too, without interfering with any of the concerns of the State, as it was founded on a subject which, he contended, implied a breach of an act of the Legislature, on which, therefore, little time for preparation, or for any particular investigation, could be required.

Lord Hobart said, that Government were not yet in possession of any official documents on the subject to which the noble Earl alluded. He hoped, therefore, that he would delay his motion till it could be in the power of his Majesty's Ministers to give him the information he required.

Earl Suffolk said, this was exactly the point on which his motion was founded. We were engaged in three wars in India. The causes of the origin of those disputes must have existed for twelve months, and yet, in breach of a positive act of the Legislature, Government confessed that they were in possession of no official documents on the subject—a confession which, he thought, doubly called for his insisting on an immediate discussion of his motion.

Lord Hobart begged that his Lordship would at least give notice.

notice of his motion for some day next week, as there was already important business before the House.

Lord Suffolk replied, that his reason for pressing on his motion was a necessary call on him to go to the country on Saturday, and his being unable to determine on what day it might be in his power to return. He should, however, yield to the request of the noble Secretary of State, with this declaration, that when he returned from the country, he should view himself entitled to proceed in his motion without respect to the consideration whether Ministers had or had not received any official documents on the subject from India.

The House then resolved into a Committee on the volunteer bill.

On clause 51st, which requires Lords Lieutenants to report the day on which particular corps are to attend at exercise to the Secretary at War or his deputy, who shall thereupon issue the pay,

Earl Spencer moved, that the words, "Secretary at War or his deputy," be omitted; and the words, "Inspector General," be substituted in their place, by which considerable time would be saved, and many advantages secured.

On this the House divided, for the amendment,

Contents - - - 10

Not Contents - - - 19

Majority in favour of the original clause 9.

On several other clauses discussions took place, but no material amendments were made. The different clauses were gone through, and the report was ordered to be received the next day.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THURSDAY, APRIL 12.

The Inspector General of the imports and exports brought in an account of the produce of the permanent taxes; an estimate of the customs; of malt exported from Great Britain to Ireland; of wheat, flour, barley, &c. exported from and imported into Great Britain from Ireland, for the different periods therein specified, and various other accounts, lately ordered to be laid before the House, on the motion of Mr. Foster. Laid on the table, and ordered to be printed.

A message from the Lords informed the House, that their Lordships

Lordships had agreed to the bankers' indemnity bill; the Irish militia families provision bill, the bank of Scotland's capital increase bill, without any amendment, and to several private bills.

Mr. Vanittart moved, that there be laid before the House an account of the grants of Parliament to the Veterinary College, and of the receipts, expenditure, and debts of that institution, for the years 1802 and 1803.

An account of the expenditure of the grants of Parliament to the Board of Agriculture for the same time.—Ordered.

COTTON TRADE.

Mr. H. Addington moved the order of the day for taking into consideration the report of the Committee on the petition of the cotton manufacturers. The order being read,

Mr. H. Addington proceeded to observe, that before he moved that the resolutions of the Committee be read a second time, it was proper he should open the nature of the subject now before the House; but he was glad that in doing so, it was not necessary for him to enter much into detail. He should call the attention of the House to the circumstances upon which the matter now stood, and then in a few words state for what reasons the Committee passed these resolutions, and why he thought it his duty to ask the House to agree to them. Gentlemen would recollect, that about four years ago, for it was early in the year 1800, a very considerable and a very unpleasant disagreement took place between the masters and workmen engaged in the cotton manufactory, in consequence of which petitions were presented to the House by a very large body, praying for legislative interference to redress their grievances. That was a period of great difficulty in the country, especially in the manufacturing part of it, arising from the stagnation of trade by the arduous contest in which we were then engaged; and also from the scarcity and high price of provisions, which to a great extent affected all classes of his Majesty's subjects, and more particularly the working part of them. He did think it extremely possible, perhaps probable, that if it had not been for the irritation arising from distress, thus produced from a combination of causes, these petitions would never have been presented. They were, however, presented, and the subject matter of them had been referred to a Committee, which (passing over one of its Members, of whom it did not become him to say any thing) consisted of very intelligent and enlightened Members

bers of that House, who considered the subject, reported upon it, and an act of Parliament passed to alter the law as it then stood, with respect to the mode of appealing to magistrates, and to appoint referees to decide on matters in dispute between masters and workmen in the cotton trade. Whether that was a proper measure or not, would be improper in him to doubt; he deferred to the sense of the perfectly respectable Members of that Committee, and impetuous and weighty reasons pressed upon their minds at the time, which induced them to make their report, and to form an opinion which was peculiar to the circumstances under which they made it. He then proceeded to give an history of the proceedings of those concerned in the weavers trade in the cotton business, of their petitions, and also of the proceedings of Parliament upon that subject, observing, that the Committee to whom it was referred, met great difficulties in the case, in which they found it impossible to satisfy both parties. The Committee had endeavoured on the one hand to form an impartial tribunal to decide on matters of dispute, to afford speedy redress to those who had just grounds of complaint, at as limited an expence as possible; and on the other, they had endeavoured to avoid any restriction or regulation which might be considered by the manufacturers as fettering the trade, in the prosperity of which, the interests of all the workmen, as well as the masters, were materially involved. In giving the petitioners all they asked, the Legislature might give them that which afterwards they might repent of asking. The Committee could have no possible object, but to do justice to both parties, and they were, perhaps, better judges of the interest of the petitioners, than the petitioners themselves. His motion should be, that the House do agree to the resolutions of this Committee; and if it should be the pleasure of the House to do so, then he should move for an act of Parliament to carry these resolutions into effect; after which, he hoped the cotton weavers themselves would, upon reflection, be satisfied and convinced they had all which could with propriety be granted, and that the manufacturers also would, in their turn, be satisfied that care had been taken that no injury was done to them; so that neither the one nor the other should hereafter think it necessary to apply to Parliament. He then moved that the resolutions be now read a second time.

Admiral Berkeley wished to know, whether this measure

was brought on by Government, or originated with the manufacturers themselves. He thought that a measure similar to this ought to be adopted, with reference to the woollen trade. He wished to know, whether any steps were likely to be taken, in consequence of a memorial which had been presented on the subject of the woollen trade.

Mr. H. Addington said, that business had been already partly brought forward by a right hon. Relation of his (the Chancellor of the Exchequer).

Admiral Berkeley—Then I am to understand it as a public measure.

Mr. Francis said, that he understood that the manufacturers were at liberty to apply to be heard by counsel against any bill that might be brought in pursuant to these resolutions, if they thought fit.

The resolutions were then read and agreed to.

Mr. H. Addington moved, that a bill be brought in pursuant to the three last resolutions.

Sir R. Buxton said, he was not going to oppose the bringing in the bill now moved for, but he wished it to be understood as his opinion, that the greatest difficulties which had been felt on this subject, had arisen chiefly from our departing from the constitutional mode of adjusting differences between master and servant; he meant that of an appeal to the magistrate.

The question was then put, and leave was given to bring in the bill.

VOLUNTEERS.

Mr. Calcraft, adverting to the notice which he had given before the recess, to move in the Committee of Supply for an additional allowance of pay and cloathing to the volunteer corps, said he now rose to fix on the 23d of May for bringing forward the proposition.

IRISH COIN.

Mr. Corry stated that he felt himself under the necessity of still farther postponing his motion respecting the circulating coin in Ireland, of which he had given notice for that day. It being the wish of his Majesty's Government that this subject should be fully investigated, and the most ample information obtained, dispatches were hourly looked for from Ireland, which were deemed necessary upon this point; and until they should arrive, he should decline to bring forward his promised motion. If the intelligence should be received by

by the next day, he would take occasion to submit the business to the consideration of the House; but if not, he hoped he should stand excused for postponing it to another day.

Mr. John Latouche expressed his regret that, under the severe pressure of the evil, which now bore on the people of Ireland, and particularly on the inhabitants of the metropolis, the right honourable Gentleman should think it proper to put off for a moment the proposition of some remedy. The honourable Member was proceeding, when

The Speaker called to order, as there was no question before the House.

PAYMENT OF IRISH OFFICERS AT PAR.

Lord Archibald Hamilton called the attention of the House to the subject of the payment of the salaries of the Ministers of Ireland, who occasionally resided in this country, at par. When this circumstance was first mentioned to the House, which it was by him, it appeared to every body who heard it, to be an extraordinary fact, when it was admitted to be a fact, and he must be allowed to remind the right hon. Gentleman (*Mr. Corry*) who admitted it, with what reluctance he brought the matter forward; however, he was impelled to it by a sense of public duty, and for the same reason he was bound to pursue it; and here he must preface what he had to say with observing, that there was no part of the duty of that House more imperative than that of watching over every part of the expenditure of the public money. There generally did exist, and always ought to exist in that House, a jealousy concerning all money transactions, and it ought to be exercised with vigilance on the present occasion; and he was glad to say, that the question which he should lay before the House for its consideration, would lie within a narrow compass, for the chief part of it was to be considered as the meaning of the plain letter of an act of Parliament. The amount of the sum out of which this arose was indeed small, but it was the principle which constituted the importance of the subject. Here he proceeded to read the act of Parliament of the 30th of the King, for regulating the payment of the salaries of all the servants of the Crown in the civil departments of the State; and then contended, that the Commissioners of the Treasury in Ireland had no right to interfere with the payment of the salaries of the officers of Govern-

ment, nor with any sum of money whatever while it was *in transitu*; for it was not only repugnant to the law he had just quoted, but contrary also to precedent. He contended that the order which had been issued by the Commissioners of the Treasury in Ireland, for the payment at par of the civil officers of the Government of the country occasionally resident in this, was not warranted, and was therefore an excess of their authority. He would ask, what were the salaries of these officers of Government? Were they not charges upon the public revenue of the country? If so, by what authority was any alteration made in them? He said, that payment to any person out of the public revenue of the country, of more than was allowed by law, was irregular, and quite unwarrantable; and if the right hon. Gentleman opposite to him (Mr. Corry) was allowed to proceed in this manner, where were we to stop? He contended, therefore, that this was an unwarrantable act. He did not charge Ministers with a deliberate design to over-rule the law; but he said, that these irregular and unwarrantable acts would have that effect, unless checked by the House. It was admitted that the half-pay officers of Ireland were not paid at par, while they might be occasional residents in this country. Now, upon what ground the civil officers of Government claimed to be paid at par, when no such advantage was allowed to the half-pay officers, he was at a loss to conceive. He knew many reasons why the half-pay officers, who had devoted the whole of their time, and often risked their lives in defence and for the service of their country, should have more advantages in the mode of receiving their little pay, but not one reason why they should have less than the civil officers of the Government. There was therefore no principle on which this mode of payment could be supported; because, if it was upon principle, the thing should be adopted generally to all whose services belonged to the Government of Ireland, and who were occasionally resident in this country. But by this practice of paying officers of the Irish Government at par, if they should happen to come over here for six weeks, they had an advantage of ten per cent. on the course of exchange. He knew not why many of the civil officers of the Irish Government came into this country. The Lord Chancellor of Ireland, for instance, what reason was there why he should be in England at all, otherwise than as a Member of Parliament, in which character he had no salary? The same ob-
servation

servation might be made on the case of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Corry); there was no occasion for his residence in England, otherwise than as a Member of Parliament, in which character he was entitled to no salary. The same might be said of the Inspector General of the imports and exports, who was not of necessity here; the same of the officers of the customs of the port of Dublin, and many others; yet they were all here, and had the advantage of receiving their salaries at par. These multiplied instances of this advantage given to the civil officers of the Executive Government of Ireland, confirmed him in the conviction of the impropriety of the practice. Here the noble Lord read passages from the account on the table, of the money paid to different officers for their salaries at par, from which he argued that there were abuses in the system, and the more he considered the subject, the more he was convinced of the impropriety of the practice. He then insisted on the particular inexpediency of the practice, under all the present circumstances of that country, and that the more remarkably, on account of the deplorable state of the currency of that country, which had for a long time past been felt as a very great evil. He maintained, that without imputing any improper motives, it looked unfavourably that the commissioners of the revenue should benefit themselves by an order which they made contrary to law, and should themselves claim, by their own order, a benefit which they did not allow to others, who, if the measure was right, had a better claim to it. He observed also, that this matter remained a secret for a while, and until he brought it forward in the House: if it was right, why was it concealed at all? this had an unfavourable appearance. He contended that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Corry) could not, of his own individual authority, do any act for the raising any money not allowed by law, for any body; still less proper did it seem to be when that money went partly to himself; such money not being in the Exchequer, and, therefore, not subject to his cognizance. These were two points on which his objection to this practice rested. The third point was that the principle on which the practice was defended, had completely failed, for it was not general in its application; the half-pay officers deriving no advantage from it, and before it could deserve the name of a principle, the application of it must be general. Lastly, the only persons who were made to benefit by the practice, were the last from whom it ought to be expected, namely, the Commissioners of the Treasury of Ireland,

Ireland; who issued the order; nor was there any excuse for this having happened by inadvertency, or any thing of that sort, for there was no account made out on the subject of the revenue of Ireland, in which the course of exchange did not appear, therefore they had the subject constantly before their eyes. He should have thought that their being in a situation of trust, would have prevented them from converting it, for they had converted it, into their own emolument: he must be allowed to deliver his opinion upon these matters, without softening his language; but to use such as were applicable to the facts, as they appeared in proof. He said, he was warranted in asserting that they had turned their situation of trust to their own private emolument. He then read the resolutions which he proposed to submit to the House;

1. Resolved, That it appears to this House, that payments have been made in London, of salaries charged on the Irish establishment, out of money to be remitted to the Irish Treasury, thereby preventing the profits of the exchange thereof from being of credit to the public, as is done in other cases.

2. Resolved, That they have been made without sufficient authority.

3. Resolved, That such practice is unwarrantable, and ought to be discontinued.

Lord Castlereagh observed, that the noble Lord, in the statement he had been pleased to make upon this occasion, had travelled more into general propositions than was necessary. The main question was a very simple one, namely, whether money in possession of the agent in England belonging to the Irish Treasury, was or was not subject to the order of the Commissioners of the Irish Treasury? Then supposing that to be decided in the affirmative, the next question would be, whether the application that was made of that money under that order, was a fit and proper application, under all the circumstances of the case? in other words, whether the order of the Commissioners of the Irish Treasury proceeded from a competent legal authority, or not? And he apprehended the noble Lord had taken the matter too widely, when he considered that the money transferred from the Treasury of that country to the Irish agent in this, must be considered as money *in transitu* to the Irish Exchequer. In the situation of all money *in transitu*, it was subject to the order of the Lords of the Treasury there, they being

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in that case, as they were in every other, responsible for the exercise of their authority in the application of that money; for as the money was issued under the authority of the three Lords of the Treasury, the order was a legal order in itself, and as such binding on the Irish agent; and he agreed entirely with the noble Lord, that the officers of the Treasury were responsible to Parliament for every thing in execution of their trust, and that they should draw every thing to the advantage of the public, in the best manner circumstances would permit; and that if the course of exchange between this country could be applied to the benefit of Ireland, in the issue of any orders or otherwise, it was a part of their duty to make it applicable to the interest of the public as much as possible, unless some particular circumstances of some particular case called for a relaxation from the general principle, which he apprehended to be the case now under consideration. The noble Lord seemed to argue the matter as if there was an actual increase of salary to these officers, by the mode of payment which had been adopted in this case; if so, he should agree with the noble Lord in the conclusion that the mode was improper; for it was beyond the competency of the Irish Treasury to increase the salaries of these officers, the amount of which was specified by law. The act of Parliament had said what the salaries of these officers should be, but that was while they exercised their functions in Ireland, and when they were to be paid there; but in the case now before the House, the officers of Government, whose salaries were thus paid, had been taken from the natural sphere of action in which they had been usually called upon to move, and brought, for special purposes, to exercise their functions in this country. It was true that application might be made to Parliament, if any alteration was necessary, in the course of the payment of these salaries; at the same time the noble Lord would see, that the whole of the question arose, not from the amount of the salaries of these officers, but from the mode of paying them, in consequence of their functions being altered and extended beyond their ordinary sphere of action; and the question was merely, whether an officer coming from Ireland to England to do his duty, shall be paid in England without the disadvantage of Exchange? He would see, that it would be straining the statement to go beyond this, or to say that it was any thing like an increase of salary. The question was, whether, as an officer did his duty

duty in England; he should not be paid at par for England, with money there. If, indeed, he discharged the functions of his office in Ireland, this would be an advantage to him to which he would not be entitled; but if he was obliged to come here to perform that office, a country in which he certainly could not live cheaper than in Ireland; nor could he do his duty in it with more satisfaction or convenience to himself than in Ireland; he would put it to the House whether it was fair to call on such an officer to perform his duty with a diminution of salary; for that would be the case were he to be subject to loss by Exchange. This mode of payment was not in fact an increase of salary, but a mere relief from a tax to which these officers would be liable if this mode of payment was not adopted. The propriety of affording this relief from a tax in such a case, he maintained to be consonant to the spirit of the act of union, as well as to the general principles of justice. He maintained that in some cases it had been allowed to those who were not compelled, as these officers were, to come from Ireland to this country. As to what had been said about the particular individuals, who took what was called the benefit of this mode of payment, (which by the way was no benefit, for it was only an exemption from a tax, which could not justly be imposed on them,) he could say of them that they were actuated by no motives but such as would do them no dishonour; neither was there any attempt to keep this matter a secret, no secrecy could attend it. He compared this mode of payment to that which was uniformly adopted in paying our troops abroad. The course of exchange was often such as to make it a matter of some expence to transmit the pay of officers and men, yet they had their whole pay, as if there was no such expence, and the public were always called upon to defray it; and therefore, in his opinion, the question was, whether the Commissioners of the Treasury of Ireland were not called upon to consider of the propriety of relieving these officers from the operation of a tax which would, unless they were relieved, attach upon them when they came to perform their duty in this country, and which would not attach on them if they performed it in Ireland? The noble Lord had said, the principle on which this mode of payment was adopted ought to be general, or not adopted at all, and therefore the half-pay officers of Ireland, who were in this country, ought to be paid at par as well as the civil officers of the

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Irish Government; but there was a distinction between the two services. The half-pay officers of Ireland had their option whether they would come here or remain in Ireland; but the civil officers were compelled to come here. He applied this to all those officers who came here, and he could not help thinking that the House would be of opinion with him, that those officers had no more than justice done to them upon this occasion. On the whole matter, he did not see any blame imputable to the Commissioners of the Irish Treasury upon this occasion; and as these resolutions were intended to be followed up by some other resolutions of disapprobation of what had been done, for which disapprobation there was no reason, he would move the order of the day.

Lord Folkestone expressed his astonishment that, after the statement which had been made by the noble Lord who proposed the resolutions, any Member of that House could be found to stand so boldly forward to justify the practice to which those resolutions referred, and least of all did he expect such attempt at justification from the noble Lord who had just sat down. How the noble Lord could reconcile his doctrine on a former occasion, that there was no depreciation of the Irish currency, with his assertion of that evening, that the payment of the Irish civil officers resident in this country at par was relief from a tax, he was at a loss to conceive. The noble Lord had maintained that this indulgence was extended equally to all the civil officers resident in this country, while it appeared, from the papers on the table, that more than half the whole allowance stated was received by the Lords of the Treasury themselves.

Mrs. Fox asked the noble Lord (Castlereagh), whom he supposed he must have misconceived in one part of his speech, whether he meant to say that the salary of the Irish officer, who resided here and received it at par, was not increased, although the exchange was ten per cent. against Ireland, and consequently so much an advance of the officer here over an officer of the same nominal salary remaining in Dublin?

Lord Castlereagh would not admit that the present rate of exchange was a proof of the depreciation of the currency of Ireland, but the effect of the desire which the people of that country had to remove their funds here.

Mr. Fox resumed, and expressed his surprise that any distinction should be imagined, much less insisted on, between the advancement of the salaries of the Irish civil officers at-

luded to and the payment of those salaries at par, or the remuneration of them for coming to this country, as the noble Lord had termed it. The noble Lord must admit that 90*l.* of British currency was equal to 100*l.* of Irish currency, and yet he argued that the officer who received 100*l.* of the former, instead of 100*l.* of the latter, obtained no addition to his income. Really the distinction was so singular, that he could not without surprise hear the noble Lord seriously maintain it. But the noble Lord had stated that this payment at par was only a release from a tax; but was not such a release, he would ask, as effectual a way of augmenting an officer's salary as any other that could be conceived? If Parliament were to relieve any description of officers from the operation of any particular tax in the country, how would it be understood but as an increase of the salaries of such officers? The exemption from any public burthen could imply nothing different, because obviously it must have the effect of advancing a man's revenue. If, said the noble Lord, Irish officers were called here by their superiors to execute their public duty, it would be unjust that they should suffer any loss. But who were the officers to whose superiors he alluded? Who was the superior that was to order the attendance of the right hon. Gentleman on the other side (Mr. Corry)? His duty as a Member of Parliament could alone render his presence in this country necessary. With respect to the late Lord Chancellor, what necessity of a public nature called him over to this country at the time he received his salary at par? The noble Lord confessed that he did not know of any, and indeed it was scarcely possible to conceive any reason that should bring him here, which, upon even the grounds laid down by the noble Lord himself, could entitle that officer to claim the allowance to which the resolutions before the House referred. If the noble Lord had in his mind any reason for the residence of that officer in this country, why not state it? What could bring an Irish Judge to reside here? The business of such man, *prima facie*, lay in Ireland. This remark applied also to the counsel for the commissioners of the revenue, and to other officers mentioned in the account on the table. The duty of those persons to attend their places in Parliament could never be pleaded as a reason for granting them the extraordinary allowance which provoked this debate. He could never patiently hear it even insinuated that, while the country gentlemen of Ireland were, by their attendance on their parliamentary duties, subject to all the disadvantages

vanities of unequal exchange, &c. the officers of Government, the servants of the Crown as they are termed, should be indemnified, should have a remuneration for coming to England—that the one should have something that must urge him to stay away, while the other should have an encouragement to attend. If such a system or language approving it were to be countenanced, not only the essence of the constitution was gone, but all decorum or regard for its forms and spirit must be extinct. If the late Lord Chancellor had come here, according to orders from his superior, that superior must be his Majesty, and what necessity he could have for the keeper of the Irish Seals it was not easy to divine; however, if he had any, it must be a special case, and it ought to be stated. If the House were to decide upon the assertion of the noble Lord, that the Irish Chancellor had no doubt some good reason for his residence here, that kind of argument would go the length of justifying any appropriation of the public money of Ireland in the same way to any favourite of the Lords of the Irish Treasury who might reside in this country, and this upon the supposition and conjecture that he had a good reason of a public nature and for the public interest for coming. If it were proposed that any officers of an inferior rank, who should come to this country from Ireland, should be recompensed for extra trouble and expence, he would readily accede to the proposition, but not in the way which had been pursued, in the instance then under consideration, by the Lords of the Irish Treasury. It had been stated by the noble Lord, that the Lords of the Treasury in this country were in the habit of exercising a similar discretion with regard to our military officers serving on foreign stations; but he hoped not without the consent of Parliament, without submitting such allowance to the consideration of that House in the army extraordinaries. If not, they too had forgotten that old word, responsibility. As to the assertion, that half-pay officers on the Irish establishment were not employed in any public department in this country, he knew the contrary to be the fact, in several instances, as inspecting officers, &c. and yet they had no remuneration such as the civil officers received. It was said, they had no claim to such remuneration; but had they not the same pretension to it as the late Lord Chancellor of Ireland? He was allowed four thousand pounds a year, as an indemnity for the loss of the place of the Speaker of the Irish House of Lords, which, in consequence of the union, he had no longer to attend.

It appeared that while resident in this country he was paid at par his half-pay resulting from this office. Why not then, upon the same principle, make the same allowance to other half-pay officers? (*A laugh*) If the principle were so extended it would be much more honourable to the Irish Government, though he would not admit that it would be seemly or constitutional to grant any such allowance at all but by the previous consent of Parliament. If any remuneration were deemed necessary to the civil officers of the Irish Government employed in consequence of the inadequacy of their salaries, the noble Lord who at the enactment of the union had manifested such a complete knowledge of projects of indemnities, and had shewn no very niggardly disposition in distributing them, should submit a proposition to that House with respect to their case; and there would, no doubt, be found the fullest readiness to extend their salaries as far as any reasonable man could desire. The case of the repeal of the absentee's tax did not appear to him to be at all analogous to the transaction before the House, because in the one case a tax was removed which was levied upon a man for living in England, while in the other a *bonus* is given to a man for coming to live in England, and this *bonus* deducted from the revenue of Ireland. This was a very material difference. The Irish officers who remained in Ireland had good cause to complain of the increase of salary above them which those officers obtained who came to reside in this country. The noble Lord had denied that this practice had been kept secret, or that there was any reason to induce the Lords of the Treasury to conceal it; but the noble Lord seemed to forget that by law the Lords of the Treasury were directed to discharge the demands of all claimants on the Treasury before they attempted to draw their own salaries, and yet from the papers on the table it appeared that the Lords of the Treasury paid themselves first, even before they suffered the money to go to the Irish Treasury. This circumstance afforded a reason why the practice to which the resolutions before the House referred should be concealed, at least that it should not be exposed if possible. Under all the circumstances of this question, the honourable Member said that inquiry should be made as to the justice of the claim of every person who had profited by this practice, and this, without a complete abandonment of duty, could not, in his opinion, be overlooked. He should therefore assent to the motion of his noble Friend, and recommend to those interested to apply to that House for any recompence

compence for their services they thought themselves entitled to, or any indemnity for losses they might sustain.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, this appeared to him to be a question upon which there could not exist any difference of opinion, if the facts were thoroughly understood. The officers of the Irish Government, employed in this country, did not, as had been supposed by some, receive 100l. British, in lieu of 100l. Irish, (that would in fact be an increase of salary) but they only received 92l. British, which was equivalent to 100l. Irish: the only difference was, whether that sum was paid in England or in Ireland. If it was paid in England, then the officer received only as much as he would have received if he had remained in Ireland; but if while the officer was in England, his salary were paid to him in Ireland, then he would be obliged to draw it over here for his subsistence, and supposing the exchange was 10l. per cent against Ireland, then he would receive instead of 92l. only 82l.; so that the question came literally to this, whether persons in public offices, who were ordered over here upon public business, ought to receive 82l. or the amount of 100l. Irish currency? It should always be observed, that these offices were created, and their salaries fixed long before the union, and consequently before it could be in contemplation that their services would be necessary in this country. It had been assumed, that the Irish officers received the benefit of this arrangement for the whole of their salaries; this was by no means the case; they were only allowed to draw certain portions of their salaries for their subsistence, according to the term of their residence in this country. It seemed admitted that the officers ought to have some additional allowance made to them for coming over to this country; the fact was they had no allowance, they were only allowed their travelling expences, and this was granted only to the inferior officers. It was to be considered also, that many of these officers were obliged to maintain a double establishment; they were obliged to keep their families in Ireland, while they were living here at a considerable expence, and yet they received no greater salary than if they had remained in Ireland. They were obliged to come from a country that was cheap, and to keep a separate establishment in a country that was dear, and all they asked was that they should receive their salaries, and that they should not have 10 per cent. taken off because they were forced to come here by the orders of their superiors.

Mr.

Mr. John Lubbock supported the original motion, upon the ground that this which he considered as an increase of their salaries was entirely defrayed by Ireland; whereas, as it was a part of the joint expenditure of the empire, England ought to defray the proportion stipulated by the union.

Mr. Windham disapproved of making distinctions in regard to those in the employ of Ireland, and argued in favour of the original motion, that in so far as you take off a *minus* you necessarily add a *plus*. He had very serious objections to the present practice, both in regard to the persons to whom, and to the mode in which that indulgence was shewn. In regard to the persons to whom the indulgence was shewn, he put several cases, among which one was, that if a person should be sent on military duty from a cheaper county to a dearer one in this country, would any allowance be made? Such allowances were not usual. If they were poor and could not afford any losses from a temporary exchange, he certainly would not object to the present practice. If they were only poor Chancellors that were in question, and that required some immunities to enable them to subsist, he should not perhaps support the present motion. To persons of this description some compensation might be allowed. But it unfortunately happened that those who stood most in need of such compensation were the last to receive it. You allow this advantage to people coming over of their own option, and deny it to many whose duty is supposed to require their attendance in this country, and to many whose duty prevents their coming here. They are exactly in the situation of a man who should wish to borrow another man's bellows: No, says the man, if you wish to blow up your fire, you must come over to my house and do it. I shall willingly allow you the use of my bellows, but I cannot lend them out of my own house. (*A loud laugh.*) He did not think it proper that some should be exonerated from the depreciation of the paper currency in Ireland, while others, who had no less title to exemption, should be subjected to that inconvenience. This distinction was the more objectionable, he conceived, as it was permitted to reside, according to the present practice, in the power and discretion of the Lords of the Treasury.

The *Master of the Rolls* said, that the noble Lord who had brought forward the motion, had laid down as a general principle that no officer of the Irish Government, who was employed in this country, should receive his salary, except sub-
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ject to the loss, by the exchange between this country and Ireland: other hon. Gentlemen who had spoken in support of the motion, had admitted that there might be cases entitled to more or less indulgence; but the noble Lord made no such distinction, he had asserted generally, that whether an officer had been ordered over here by his superiors or not, still his salary ought to be paid in Ireland, in order that he might lose 10 per cent. by bringing it over to England. He would not enter into an inquiry how far it was necessary for any of the principal officers under the Irish Government to come over to this country; nor would he now consider whether it was right to compensate any officers in a particular manner: he supposed that some of the officers, who before the union could discharge the duties of their offices in Ireland, were now obliged to come over to England. If he was correct in his supposition, it appeared to him clear that the officers who engaged in Ireland to serve for a certain sum, ought to receive the same salary if they were ordered to come to England. He did not mean to contend that there ought to be any compensation; he only meant that there ought to be no diminution of the salary. A man who received 100*l.* a year in Ireland, had no occasion to inquire what would be its value in London, he would have nothing to do with the rate of exchange, because he would not want to bring it over to England; but if the Government change that man's situation, if they bring him over to England where he performs the same duties, is he not then entitled to the same salary? If he is compelled to sustain the loss by exchange, then he has not the same salary, and he sustains a loss of 10 per cent. on his salary, merely because Government think it right to employ him in one place rather than another. It appeared to him clear that the officer ought to be paid where he performed his duty. It had been argued, that because a man performed business for the Government of Ireland in England, that therefore he must of necessity be paid in Ireland; upon the same principle, the members of the Board of Control ought to be paid in India. It had been contended that taking off a burthen was equivalent to an increase of a salary; but in this instance, it was not taking off a burthen, it was only placing the officer in the same situation, with regard to the amount of his salary, as he would have been in if he had remained at home. If the service of the public required that he should perform the duties of his office at York, he should expect to be paid at York. The case of half-pay officers

officers which had been put, did not in his opinion apply, because the principle contended for, in this case was merely this, that where the duties of any particular office required that the person holding it should come to England, that he should receive the salary of that office in England.

Dr. Laurence argued that such payments were made without any constitutional authority, and therefore, independently of their equity, he found himself called on to oppose the general principle. He contended particularly that the proportion stated by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) was by no means observed, if any credit might be given to the papers on the table. The learned Doctor here turned up an article where Mr. Wickham had received an order to draw his salary in this country to any amount, not exceeding the whole for the year, which was four thousand five hundred pounds. From such an order he argued any person here might receive the salary, and transmit it to Ireland at so much additional profit. He laid considerable stress on the periods necessary for their residence in this country, and that their payments might be made and really were made, as appeared from the papers before them, without regard to the proportion or necessity of such periods.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* replied, that Mr. Wickham was only empowered to draw at the rate of his whole salary.

Lord Henry Petty objected to the Members of the Irish Government taking their own cases into consideration, and making their own remuneration, however just the principle might be on which they had acted; he instanced particularly in the case of the Lord Chancellor.

Mr. Francis said, that among many weighty arguments, which determined him to vote for the original motion, there were two, which he wished particularly to state and insist on, because they were of a plain and obvious quality, and not liable to be perplexed and confounded by technical skill or sophistical distinctions. To these, Sir, (said the hon. Gentleman) I expect to hear a plain and rational answer, which hitherto has not been attempted. In the first place, I hold it to be a principle inseparable from the duties of all Government, and from the duties of this Government more than any other, that the personal interest of every individual trusted with power should in all cases be one and the same with the interest of the community. If a general calamity should

should exist, or a general burthen, is to be endured, to the remedy or relief of which the labour, the industry and the skill of persons in high office ought to be unremittingly applied, it is not wise, it is not safe to exempt such persons from their share in the general pressure or suffering that falls upon all the rest. You take away a principal motive or stimulus to such persons to exert themselves in the public service, when you tell them, that, whether they neglect their duty or not, they are sure to be borne harmless in the receipt of their own income. Least of all, is it prudent or safe to suffer such parties to form the measure and to distribute the amount of their own relief. But, even if the contrary were true, if it could be maintained that persons in high and lucrative offices ought to be specially and exclusively exempted from any share in a public suffering, still the course which has been taken ought not to be endured. It is asserted that the payments in question have not been secret—have not been clandestine. My answer is, that they have been made not only without the authority, but without the knowledge of Parliament. I, for one, never heard of the fact, until it was introduced by the noble Lord on this side. If the thing be proper, it ought to be done by a vote of this House, or in some other regular parliamentary way. Whenever the general principle of reimbursing individuals for losses on exchange of salaries comes to be considered, you will have other cases infinitely more pressing to provide for. I shall state only one, which I think could hardly be resisted, and which has frequently occurred: I mean that of an English regiment disbanded in Ireland, and of which the officers, all English, are compelled by their situation, circumstances, and connections to reside in England on their Irish half pay. Out of that pittance they lose ten per cent. on the remittance from Ireland. Would you refuse to indemnify such persons, while the principal officers of Government are permitted to reimburse themselves out of the public purse? Now, Sir, I ask for information on a point of parliamentary construction, in which I think the honour, because I am sure the duty of this House, is essentially concerned. Supposing the motion of the noble Lord should be set aside, with such facts brought into the view of the House, and so immediately connected with our first duty as guardians of the public purse, and that this should be done by an expedient so disgraceful, and I believe in such a case so unprecedented in the proceedings of Parliament, as that of moving the order of the day, in what

state will this business be left? Will it not be concluded that the House renounces its duty, and abdicates its jurisdiction over a money question? Will it, or will it not, be taken, by the parties who have hitherto acted in their own behalf, by their own authority, for an acknowledgment of the power they have so assumed? What is to check or to limit them in the future exercise of that discretion, when Parliament, with the case before them, refuses to inquire into the past, or even to lay down any rule for the future? Certainly the gentlemen who have taken good care of themselves, may act with more reserve, and be less indulgent to the claims of others full as good as their own. Or they may choose and select the objects of their favour. I ask, is it fit that such a question should be left undecided? In fact, I fear it will amount to a decision in favour of the abuse, and furnish a pretence for other practices of the same nature. When a House of Commons refuses to inquire into an unauthorized application of public money, and when the fact is not denied, it gives an approbation to the thing done, and makes it a precedent for greater abuses.

Mr. H. Thornton thought that the present practice was perfectly consistent both with law and equity, and therefore opposed the original motion.

Mr. Barham, upon the principle that 100,000*l.* received in this country and sent to Ireland would be worth 110,000*l.* opposed the system that was now acted on, as giving an additional income to those that were so paid, while others must necessarily labour under a deficiency to the same amount. He argued, that whenever either civil or military officers should be on their duty, there was no question but they were to be paid by the treasury of the country by which they were employed.

Mr. Foster argued, that whatever money was subtracted from the Treasury was so much taken from the public, and that the House therefore had a right to inquire into it. If the profits derivable from the rate of exchange were not returned to the Treasury of Ireland, the public must necessarily be deprived of those profits. He argued against the necessity of the residence of the Members of the Irish Government as such in this country.

Lord Castlereagh, in explaining, was called to order by Lord Folkestone.

Mr. Foster begged to adduce an instance which came within his own knowledge. When he was connected with the revenue of Ireland, the Counsel for the Commissioners had only 100*l.* a year, whereas in the papers now before the House,

House, he perceived that that Honourable Gentleman had received goal. in the course of three years. If this additional sum was considered as a compensation, he saw no reason why such Gentlemen should also avail themselves of the profits derived from the present rate of exchange.

Mr. Ormsby said he was always unwilling to trouble the House, and particularly so at this present moment. He had the honour of filling the office just adverted to, and the fact was as stated that the salary was but 100*l.* a year. The fees of his office arose from the various business and cases laid before him, for opinions on bills to be drawn. For this he had been paid at par, and this was all that he had received since he came to England. He believed that if the fact could be investigated, it would appear that the officers who came over to this country, expended more than the amount of their salaries, and all the money they drew upon their private accounts, they drew subject to all the loss upon exchange. It was unnecessary for him to repeat the arguments upon the general question. The officers paid at par gained nothing, the fact only was that the Treasury forbore to make a gain by them. It had been said, that at the time of the union, there was a compensation given to the counsel to the Treasury; that compensation was not granted to him, but to his predecessor in the office, *Mr. Johnson*, and that compensation was discontinued when *Mr. Johnson* was promoted to the bench in the Common Pleas. With regard to the legality of the Lords of the Treasury making use of public money before it actually came into the Exchequer of Ireland, he wished to say one word: if this right was disputed it would be now disputed for the first time; it was a right that they had been in the constant practice of exercising; it was perfectly well known that almost the whole of the army of Ireland was paid in the different parts of the country by the collectors of the revenue, who received acquittances for the money so advanced, so that in point of fact the money never did reach the Exchequer. The interest of the debt of Ireland due in England was paid in England, out of the money raised by loan, without the money having been previously sent over to the Treasury of Ireland. It is true there was no written law upon this subject, but the practice had been constant and uniform as he had stated it. There were many cases where collectors were compelled, by different acts of Parliament, to pay away the public money before it came into the Treasury; for instance, the marching guineas to soldiers. He could not therefore think the Lords of the Irish Treasury had acted illegally.

gally. Much had been said, with regard to the nature and description of the officers, and the duty they had to perform : if Gentlemen supposed that a greater number of officers were brought over here than was necessary for the public service, they were very much mistaken ; the number and complicated nature of the questions that had arisen since the union, upon legislative, commercial, and other points, were such that he could assure the House, that the number of officers was very inadequate indeed to the duties they had to perform. The several revenue officers whose names had been mentioned, had not been brought over without indispensable necessity. The House knew that the schedule of Irish duties had been prepared, which had met with the most unqualified approbation from the persons in this country the best enabled to appreciate the merit of such a performance. It could not be supposed that such a schedule could have been prepared if the Irish officers in question had not been on the spot, because points daily and hourly arose, on which it was necessary to refer to them. Gentlemen were very much mistaken if they supposed that the Irish business was so easily performed ; it was of a nature, recurrence, and difficulty, for which he was sure Gentlemen would make great allowances if they knew it. It had been said by an hon. Gentleman that he did not see the necessity of the attendance of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in this country ; but surely this was a point which it was unnecessary to argue ; a few words would be sufficient on the subject. When it was considered that this officer had perpetual questions put to him upon every subject, and every department, upon which it was expected that he should give full information, both in and out of that House, the necessity of his presence was obvious. It might be necessary to add that the assistance which he received in London, in performance of his duties, was small indeed ; the time necessarily employed in the various duties of his office was such, that his right hon. Friend had found it impossible to spend more than two months in Ireland during the whole of last year. Though the expences of the two countries were united, the Exchequers were still separate ; and if ever the discharge of the office of the Chancellor of the Exchequer of Ireland called for diligence, or was attended with difficulty, it was since the union. With regard to the question before the House, he hoped it was clearly understood that the Irish officers in this country received no more than they would have received in Ireland : surely then the House could not agree to resolutions,

tions, which went to throw a blame upon persons who had only acted from motives of justice in new situations, and under novel circumstances. He was quite ashamed for having taken up the time of the House, and thanked them for their indulgence.

Sir Laurence Parsons opposed the original motion: it appeared to him that the Lords of the Irish Treasury had acted consistently with justice and equity, and therefore he should vote for the order of the day.

Mr. T. Grenville referred to several observations, which had been made by different hon. Members on the other side of the House, and said, that the arguments which the noble Lord on the same side of the House with himself had advanced with so much ability, were so completely unanswered, that he should not presume to do away the impression they had made upon the House by any attempt on his part to repeat them. One hon. Gentleman indeed had appealed to the prudence and discretion of the House, and then asked if it was necessary for the House to enter into the merits of the case? He had concluded with inviting the House rather to *blink the question*. What, when the House is told that there has been an illegal issue of the public money, should Parliament be told, that instead of looking into the case, they should not exercise that right which the people have committed to their charge, but rather be inclined to blink the question? An assertion had been made in the course of debate, that the Lords of the Treasury had a legal authority for the issuing of public money. No doubt they had. But could that be supposed to be any argument against the resolutions which had been submitted to the House? Neither his noble Friend, nor any other person who spoke in the course of the debate, had denied the existence of such an authority. They only objected to what appeared to them to be an illegal exercise of that authority, in the paying away the money of the public in a manner for which they had no vote or authority from that House. For that principal reason he most heartily supported the motion, and resisted the order of the day.

The *Attorney General* expressed his opinion, that if the Irish Treasury had adopted any other line of conduct than that which was now in question, it would have appeared most extraordinary. The case was simply this, that the Irish Treasury had funds in England; they owed to a public officer who had been ordered here on public business, 100l. Irish, being 92l. British: ought they then to pay the money here,

here, or send it over to Ireland that it might be remitted back to the officer, who then instead of 92l. would receive only 82l.? This was literally the whole question, and it was one upon which it appeared to him impossible to entertain a doubt.

Sir John Newport did not mean to contend that those officers of the Irish Government, whose attendance here he considered to be essentially necessary, ought to experience any loss in the receipt of their emoluments. But admitting the principle, he complained that they were not to be allowed to discuss whether the payments made had been regular and fair. He thought there were considerable objections to the manner in which the money had been issued, nor was it fit to issue public money without the purview of Parliament. If this was not the period, when was the proper time for discussing the subject? Objecting, therefore, as he did, that no opportunity was afforded for discussion, he should vote against the previous question.

Lord A. Hamilton said, the expressions of some hon. Members had been objected to: but the House would recollect, that he had asserted that the act in itself was not legal; no person had controverted that. An observation had been made, that a servant should be paid his travelling expences; but there was no argument in that, as no person gave in such an estimate as travelling expences to Parliament, and, if that was to be urged against inquiry, no one could say but that travelling expences had been paid beside. As to the supposition of sending money to Ireland for the purpose of reducing the amount, there was a fallacy in it as an argument. It indeed would be a work of supererogation to do so; but why not pay the officers of the public to the same amount here, as their Irish money would come to if it was paid in Ireland where it was due? As an hon. Baronet (*Sir J. Newport*) had observed, it was an unwarrantable distribution of the public money to pay it otherwise; and it was unworthy the dignity of Parliament to refuse entering into an inquiry.

The question was then called for, and there appeared,

For the order of the day 82

Against it - - - - 44

Majority - 38

The order of the day was then read for the House receiving the report of the Irish militia offers bill, which
was

was received, and the third reading was fixed for the next day.

The report of the Irish militia augmentation bill was also received, and the bill was ordered to be read a third time the next day.

Mr. Calcraft said, that at that late hour he would not delay the House by making any observations on either of the bills, but should reserve himself until the third reading. Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

FRIDAY, APRIL. 13.

Counsel were heard in continuation relative to the appeal, *Abercromby v. Fleming*. To proceed again on Monday.

The bills upon the table were forwarded in their several stages.

The order of the day being read for going into a Committee on the priests' and deacons' bill, Lord Walsingham took the chair.

The *Bishop of St. Asaph*, pursuant to his intimation on a former evening, made a variety of observations on the subject. After referring to the leading provision of the bill, he proceeded to observe, that the sacerdotal character in itself could not be done away by the secular power; the *Sacerdotium Catholicum* was that which no secular power could either give or take away; it was derived from a higher source. He agreed that it was necessary and proper, that some exact and defined limits should be put to the age at which persons should be admissible into the sacred orders of deacon and priest. In describing to the Committee the history of the subject, the learned Prelate referred to various ecclesiastical authorities, whereby it appeared, that some variations had obtained with respect to the age at which persons were admissible into the orders in question. In the earlier ages of the church, deacons were required to be of the age of 25 years, and priests of that of 30: this was about the fourth century. In some time after, by a decree of the council of Trent, persons of the age of 25 were admissible into priest's orders. After contending for the indelibility of the sacred character, the rev. Prelate observed, that in cases where a radical or original defect in the ordination existed, as in the case of marriages improperly solemnized,

nized, &c. the Legislature may declare the nullity of such proceedings; and it was upon this principle chiefly, that he agreed to the relevant provision of the bill.

The *Duke of Norfolk* expressed his concurrence in the principle laid down by the rev. Prelate, as to the indelibility of the sacerdotal character. Respecting this, it was a maxim in the antient Catholic Church, *Nec heresis, nec apostasia delit*; but with respect to the subject, there were one or two considerations which struck him as material. A person may innocently become subject to the enactment of the bill, as in the instance where he was, through misinformation; or other causes, led to suppose that he was either 23 or 24 years of age, when in fact it might not be so. There were cases also in which the bishop who ordained may not be wholly exempt from blame; and it may not be unworthy of consideration, what degree of punishment should be incurred by a diocesan who should so infringe upon an act of Parliament.

The *Bishop of St. Asaph* explained: The case adverted to by the noble Duke was one of those, he conceived, within the contemplation of the bill. With respect to the latter consideration, bishops were, as the law now stood, liable to be called to account should they act in violation of an act of Parliament.

The leading provision of the bill, which enacts that no person shall be admissible to the sacred orders of deacon and priest, unless he shall have completely attained the 23d or 24th year of his age respectively, &c. was then agreed to.

After some further observations on the part of the rev. Prelate and noble Duke above-mentioned, the remaining provisions of the bill, with a few verbal amendments, were agreed to.

On the motion of the Bishop of St. Asaph, a clause was inserted for the conservation of the rights, with respect to this bill, of the Metropolitans of the respective parts of the united kingdom.

The House then resumed, and ordered the bill to be reported on Monday.

The report of the volunteer bill was then received *pro forma*.

Lord Auckland observed, that in consequence of the unavoidable delay of printing the bill, he did not think the report could be considered on so early a day as was at first proposed. He seemed to think not before Tuesday.

The

The bill was then, with the amendments, on the motion of Lord Walsingham, ordered to be printed.

Adjourned till Monday.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

FRIDAY, APRIL 13.

Sir John Newport moved to discharge the order for taking into consideration the Ilchester election petition, in order to fix it for a future day; which motion, after some conversation between Mr. J. Graham, Mr. Baldwin, and Mr. Hiley Addington, was negatived.

Mr. J. Graham presented a petition from certain voters of Chippenham, respecting the right of voting in that borough, which was ordered to be taken into consideration on the same day as the former petition.

Mr. Secretary Yorke, after referring to the order of the 29th of March, giving leave to bring in a bill to suspend the operation of the army of reserve act, observed, that it had been more convenient to bring in two bills, one for Great Britain, and one for Ireland. He therefore moved to discharge the former order, and for leave to bring in a bill or bills respecting the same subject. Leave given.

Mr. Secretary Yorke afterwards brought in the bill for suspending the army of reserve act in Great Britain, which was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time on Tuesday, and to be printed.

Mr. Secretary Yorke called the attention of the House to an act of last session, for the more speedy and effectual completing the officers of the militia, which being limited in its duration to the 25th of March in the present year, had, through inadvertency, been suffered to expire. It appearing, however, absolutely necessary to revive and continue that act, he therefore moved for leave to bring in a bill for that purpose. Leave given.

MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer moved the order of the day, for a Committee of Supply; and to refer to the said Committee the estimates respecting the militia pay, cloathing, and allowances, and also the estimate of secret services; which was ordered.

The House having resolved itself into a Committee of Supply,

The Chancellor of the Exchequer moved the following resolutions and sums, which were severally agreed to.

To make provision for the pay and cloathing of the militia of Great Britain, for the allowances to adjutants and serjeant-majors of ditto, and also for the militia of Ireland and subaltern officers of ditto.

Secret service money - - - - - £. 150,000

Sums awarded to be paid by the British Government, in pursuance of the 7th article of the treaty with America - - - - - 412,000

To make good Exchequer bills issued last year upon the aids of 1804 - - - - - 11,000,000

Trustees of the British Museum - - - - - 000

The House having resumed, the report was ordered to be received, and the Committee to sit again on Monday.

IRISH MILITIA AUGMENTATION BILL.

Mr. T. Grenville observed, that several Gentlemen had understood that both the bills were not to be read a third time on the same day, and some who were not then present wished to speak upon the bill for augmenting the Irish militia; he therefore proposed, if the right hon. Gentleman (*Mr. Secretary Yorke*) had no objection, to postpone the third reading of that bill till some day next week.

Mr. Secretary Yorke said, if there were any Gentlemen who did not expect the bill to come on on that day, he had no objection to postpone the third reading till Monday.

Mr. Sheridan thought the priority ought to be given to the bill for augmenting the militia of Ireland, as they ought to augment first, before they drew away the existing militia, since it would be very preposterous if the bill for accepting the offers was to be agreed to, and then the bill for augmenting to be negatived.

Mr. Secretary Yorke observed, that the address upon his Majesty's message only spoke of enabling his Majesty to accept the offers of the Irish militia, but took no notice of the augmentation; the former, therefore, of course had the priority.

The bill was then ordered to be read a third time on Monday.

RUSSIAN MEDIATION.

Mr. Fox wished for an answer to a question respecting a subject he had formerly adverted to, namely, the Russian mediation, which, if it was satisfactory, might save him and the

the House much trouble. He had had an intention to bring forward a motion upon the subject very soon after the recess; he had however heard reports of some important transactions going on with Russia, which, if true, might form a considerable objection to the production of papers. If he received a satisfactory answer upon this subject, he should avoid making any motion upon it.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer was glad of the opportunity of explaining what had been rather severely and inadvertently upon by the hon. Gentleman on a former occasion. He stated on a former day, that there was every wish on the part of the Ministers to put the House in possession of all the information in their power, but that there were objections which might render it highly inexpedient to lay any papers respecting the subject before the House. He then stated two objections; the one arising from circumstances existing at that time, and the other from subsequent circumstances, which might still prevent his Majesty's Ministers from making any communication to the House: these latter circumstances still existed. Whether any negotiations were subsisting with Russia, he was sure neither the hon. Gentleman nor the House would expect to be informed; nor, he was convinced, would the hon. Gentleman, if he knew of the circumstances which still existed, press any motion upon the subject. He assured the hon. Gentleman he had been as explicit as he could, consistently with his duty.

Mr. Fox said he was satisfied with the explanation of the right hon. Gentleman, and should therefore wave making any motion upon the subject.

Whilst upon his legs, Mr. Fox gave notice of his intention to make a motion, on Friday next, relative to what had been done for the defence of the country.

Mr. Johnstone moved for a detailed account of the receipts and disbursements of the island of Ceylon, from the time it came into our possession to the latest period to which the same could be made up. Ordered.

Mr. Corry said, he had the preceding day begged leave to postpone his intended motion, respecting the circulation of Ireland, till that day, it being the wish of his Majesty's Ministers to wait for the latest communications from that country. No communications having, however, been received that day, he should again postpone the motion till Monday.

Lord Folkestone wished to know, if any use had been

made of the bill for the more effectually officering the militia; as if not, it might be a reason against its revival.

Mr. Secretary Yorke replied, that whatever might have been the use made of the bill, it was necessary to revive it, in order that the militia might be properly officered. The returns of the number of officers appointed under the bill might be easily obtained.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer gave notice, that he should on Wednesday se'nnight move the ways and means for raising the supply of the year.

IRISH MILITIA.

Mr. Secretary Yorke moved the third reading of the Irish militia offers bill.

Mr. Kinnaird made some objections to the bill and to the mode of augmenting the militia, which, as it was kept on foot at the expence of both kingdoms, ought to be for the defence of both. He concluded by urging the necessity of energetic measures at the present crisis.

Mr. Lee expressed himself strongly in favour of an imperial militia, conceiving that there was no sound reason for locking up a certain number of militia in England or in Ireland exclusively. He thought that all distinctions upon this subject ought to be done away, as so long as the militia of the two countries remained distinct, so long Ireland was deprived of a part of those advantages which ought to result from the union. He stated that besides the 6000 of the Irish militia who appeared in the paper on the table, he understood that three regiments more had since volunteered their services in the same way.

Mr. Bankes repeated his former objections to the measure, for which he conceived that no necessity had been made out, nor could he perceive that by taking away 10,000 militia from Ireland, any number of men could be got for general service.

Mr. Windham reserved his opinion on the general subject, until the bill which had been postponed should be brought forward. What he rose for in the present instance, was to throw out an idea, which he thought necessary for him on this occasion, lest he should be supposed to acquiesce in sentiments from which he differed, although his general opinion was in unison with the hon. Gentleman who uttered them. What he meant applied to that which was commonly called the

the love of our country: by that he neither meant that which embraced the general interests of the world, as they might be viewed by some, nor that contracted policy which was adopted by others, although he admitted that some of the best principles that a man cherished in society, arose from local attachment for the country, as the particular spot that gave him birth. This attachment, although local and contracted, led to many generous acts; but still he would not have it pressed too far, such as to make a man attend to the particular interest of Sussex instead of Kent, or any thing of that nature; he wished for something more liberal, and that Gentlemen should take a view of the true interests of the British empire, not of England in contradistinction to Ireland, nor Ireland as different from England, but of the general and united interests of both. Not that he wished to be understood to bind himself to any broad general principle applicable to all cases of this nature, for he knew how many virtuous sentiments originated in what might properly be called local prejudices; for attachment to the spot which gave a man birth, or that in which his ancestors had made great achievements, or the like, was of that character, and in one sense was the love of one's country altogether, for that was to prefer its interest to that of the rest of mankind. He therefore wished; that in judging of the interest of the British empire, Gentlemen would consider as much as they could the case of England and of Ireland as one and the same thing. He thought it necessary to make these few observations, at the same time that he retained his opinion on the general military system which Ministers had adopted for both parts of the empire.

Mr. Secretary Yorke approved of every syllable uttered at that time by the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, upon the subject of the love of our country, and he deprecated the practice of endeavouring to set off one part of the empire against the other in interest, for that was directly hostile to the true spirit of the union between Great Britain and Ireland, an event from which he expected great benefits to arise, as we had felt from the union between England and Scotland. He proceeded to defend the bill then before the House, and adverted to the arguments which had been urged against it, maintaining the propriety of the measure altogether upon general principles.

Lord Fulkestone objected to the general principles of the bill.

Sir John Newport observed upon the militia system in general,

general, of which the present measure was a branch. He said he had no intention of calling in question the purity of the motives of those gentlemen who had entered into certain resolutions on the subject of the militia volunteering, to go out of their own country into another part of the empire. He considered those noblemen and gentlemen as persons of pure honour and perfect integrity, who acted from the most unquestionably virtuous feelings, whether they were correct in judgment or not. He said he should give a vote that might differ from that which he gave on a former occasion upon this bill, which arose from an understanding that no provision was at all intended to be made for an interchange of the militia of the two countries; and he trusted, at all events, if any part of the militia of Ireland was to be called out of that country, they would not be replaced by foreigners. He took occasion to observe upon the union between this country and Ireland. He thought that measure had not been fairly treated, it had not yet had any thing like a fair trial. Those who planned it, and from whose talents and exertion both countries most justly expected much for the general advantage of both parts of the empire, had not hitherto been able to act as could have been wished; and until some measures came from those eminent persons according to their sense of the utility of the union, and the true spirit of it as a measure of general policy for the interest of the empire, the union could not be said to have been fairly tried. He must be allowed also to say it appeared to him to be impolitic to bring forward from day to day those measures which applied only to particular objects, and the provisions of which were of a local and temporary nature. He wished to see some broad, general and permanent system adopted equally applicable to each part of the united empire, so as to consolidate the interests, conciliate the hearts, and meet the wishes of both sides; but he could not help saying that a great deal of the advantages the empire might have derived from the good wishes of leading men, had been done away by the firebrands of discord of late employed in Ireland.

Mr. Secretary Yorke explained what he had formerly said on the subject of the army of reserve.

Mr. Fox said, that his reason for rising then was, to take notice of what had just fallen from an hon. Member behind him (Sir John Newport). He was glad he understood the hon. Member as to what he had said on a former night, for he had thought he had cast reflections on those noblemen and gentlemen

gentlemen who signed the resolution alluded to, relative to the militia going out of this country. They were characters of the highest class, and for whom he professed to have very warm attachment; and as he now understood the hon. Member did not mean to express himself in the way he (Mr. Fox) then understood he had done, all he would say was, he was sorry he had misunderstood him, and he begged his pardon. As to the debate of that night, it had, as on some other occasions, been fashionable to go into extraneous matter; but he should not follow the example; there were many points stated which he should not discuss; but on the point of the love of his country, he must say that he was between the two extremes, neither desirous that local attachment should check general sentiment, nor that general sentiment should wholly destroy local attachment. It was true that Parliament, as such, must consider the two countries, England and Ireland, united in interests as one individual country; but while they were legislating on a measure so local in its nature as that of the militia was, they must consider what were the dispositions of the people of each country, and possibly particular spots in each country. So that the House was not, in this case, to consider the act of Parliament upon general principles, without regard to local attachment; and here came a difference between the friends and the enemies of the union; the one wished to diminish, the other to increase these local attachments, and the prejudices arising out of them; nor was it to be at once cured. It was true the act of union declared the two countries to be joined as one, but it was not by acts of Parliament, but by habits that men felt; it was not by the statute of the 6th of Anne or the 40th of George that men regulated their feelings; these were not the rules by which we distinguished between an Englishman and a Scotchman, or between either of them and an Irishman; nor could they change a man's preference for the county of Sussex to that of Kent. These things depended upon habits, which could not be hastily done away. But there was a part of this bill that appeared to him to require amendment. If we brought into England 10,000 Irish militia, we should have among them a great number of catholics; they were all under the discipline of the mutiny bill, and chiefly if not wholly protestant officers. It was a part of military discipline to oblige men to go to church. One would not think that this power would be used for the purpose of oppression, and he hoped not, but he submitted that either a clause should be introduced into this bill,

bill, or else a new bill should be brought in, in which provision should be made, by which these catholics should not be compelled to follow the protestant form of worship against their scruples of conscience.

Sir L. Parsons observed there was nothing in the articles of war by which they were compelled to do this. He then proceeded to observe on the union of the two countries: Gentlemen seemed to consider Ireland as if it were another and remote country beyond the Atlantic—whereas the true way to consider that matter was to consider the channel between England and Ireland as a mere canal, by which a communication was to be constantly kept up between them. Upon the measure now before the House, he was a friend to it, nor could he omit this opportunity of observing that Ireland was never better taken care of by sea or land than at the present time; which was not the case in every instance in the time of the late Administration, the particulars of which, although he could, he would forbear to state.

Mr. Wm. Smith observed, that Irish Gentlemen appeared to him to accede to this measure under the idea that it was to be reciprocal, and that similar offers were to be made by the English militia. He wished the House to consider to what length that idea, if indulged, might go. He thought we should not try any thing of this kind without a general revision of the militia law, and an alteration of a permanent nature for the future; but all the present militia must be allowed to remain as they are, for Parliament could not, consistently with its honour, operate upon them by an *ex post facto* law. He thought this bill objectionable on the ground that it would increase the price of substitutes, which was a tax, on account of men being unwilling to enter where the nature of the service was extended. But above all, considering the character of the Government with which we had to contend, not only now, but the Government which France might assume if they should be so happy as to part with its present head, he thought it was well worth the while of the House to consider whether we should not adopt a different system for our defence in future, although hitherto we had been indeed happy in that system,

Lord Proby was against the bill.

Colonel Craufurd entered into some general observations on the bill, and proceeded to propose an amendment, the object of which he said was, to put an end to that state of deliberation in which the present bill placed the militia.

He

He was about to expatiate upon the detail of his amendment, when

Mr. Secretary Yorke called to order, on the ground that the detail of the measure should not take place until it had been moved.

The Speaker decided accordingly.

Mr. Pytches opposed the bill.

General Loftus approved of the bill; he spoke in terms of high commendation of the Irish soldiery, and said, he thought great advantages would result from the interchange of the militia of the two countries.

After a few words from Lord Euston, Mr. Whitbread, Colonel Hutchinson, and the Secretary at War, the House divided,

For the bill, - 100

Against it, - 42—Majority, 58

Mr. Yorke proposed two new clauses; the object of one was, to limit the duration of the bill to the 25th March 1806, and the other, enacting that the service of the Irish militia in England should be limited to the duration of the bill; both of which were, after some conversation, agreed to, and the bill was passed.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in pursuance of his notice, moved for the appointment of a Committee to take into consideration the petition from the counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, &c. respecting the exportation of grain: the object for which he moved this Committee was, to consider whether the price at which wheat was allowed to be exported under the 31st of George III. was not, under all the circumstances, too low.

The motion was agreed to, and the Committee was appointed.

The other orders of the day were gone through, and the House adjourned to Monday.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

MONDAY, APRIL 16.

Their Lordships heard counsel in the appeal *Fleming v. Abercromby*: further hearing deferred till next day.

The Irish militia voluntary offer bill was brought up from the Commons, and read a first time.

On the motion of Lord Auckland, the volunteer amended bill was ordered to be read a third time the next day, and the Lords to be summoned.—Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, APRIL 10.

Sir John Newport stated that, about three weeks since, he had moved for a return to be made by the treasurers of counties in Ireland to that House: he understood no such return had been made. He rose now to give notice, that, on that day se'nnight, if the return was not produced in the interim, he should move an order to enforce it.

An officer from the Navy Board presented an account of the number of artificers now employed in his Majesty's dock-yards. Ordered to lie on the table.

Mr. Corry mentioned that a notice which had been given to the House of a motion to be submitted to its consideration on the subject of the silver currency in Ireland, had been postponed to that day, in expectation of the arrival of some necessary documents from the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. He had now the pleasure to acquaint the House that documents had been received from his Excellency of such a nature as to render unnecessary any act of legislation upon the subject, and such measures had been taken by his Majesty's Ministers, by and with the advice of the Privy Council, upon this subject, on which they had long continued to deliberate, and of which they had never lost sight, as effectually to provide a remedy amply commensurate to every exigency of existing occasions.

Sir Robert Buxton observed, that as it was highly important to the House, and to the country at large, to be acquainted with the names and public deserts of the several persons who were distinguished by the public bounty of the Crown, in those pensions which formed so considerable a part of the public charges of the nation, he should move, that there be laid before the House a list of the names of persons to whom pensions are granted, payable at the Exchequer; the amount of each pension respectively; and the date when granted. Ordered.

AYLESBURY ELECTION.

Sir George Cornwall moved the order of the day for the second reading of the bill for the better prevention of bribery and corruption in the borough of Aylesbury.

The question being put.

The *Marquis of Titchfield* rose to oppose the further proceeding on the bill; first, because he did not think the advocates of the bill had made out a case sufficiently strong to warrant the adoption of such a measure, which went to punish indiscriminately all the electors of Aylesbury, for the alleged

alleged crime of only a portion of them; and secondly, because the charge was only stated to be substantiated against a few, compared with the number who claimed the right of voting. For the present the noble Marquis did not feel it necessary to state any further arguments upon it; but concluded with moving an amendment, that instead of the words, "be now read," there be inserted the words, "this day three months."

Sir J. Newport warmly supported the bill: He contended it was a measure absolutely necessary to mark the just indignation of that House against the gross and flagitious delinquency of the borough of Aylebury, and the infamous instances of the most foul and atrocious corruption openly carried on with the electors of that borough at the late elections in defiance of the laws, in the most flagrant prostitution of electioneering franchises. It appeared from the reports of their Committee, to whose consideration the merits of that election had been referred, that three houses in the town had been opened for the palpable and avowed purposes of bribery and corruption; that upwards of two hundred of the electors had received the bribes, not only of one but of all the candidates; that they signed their names to an address, soliciting a candidate, whom they had never known or seen, to stand for their borough, for no other purpose than to raise the market, and enhance the price of corruption;—that in the public room where those men entered for the purpose of receiving their bribes, there was a bowl of punch at one end of the table, and a bowl of guineas at another. Having mentioned a variety of instances of a like nature, he said it was impossible for Parliament to pass unpunished a case of such foul corruption, so utterly obnoxious to the spirit of our constitution, and the purity of the Commons, without abandoning both, and furnishing new and strong arguments for reformers out of doors; when the best and most wholesome species of reform was already in the power of the House itself, by checking in the first instance, and branding, by the most exemplary punishment, every such flagitious instance of corruption, as that which marked out the borough of Aylebury as a fit example to deter other boroughs from acting with such baseness, and prostituting to bribery the constitutional trust reposed in the electors; he therefore supported the bill.

Mr. Hurst fully agreed in the sentiments of the hon. Baronet; as to the justice and necessity of exemplary punishment to the persons actually guilty of such foul and flagitious corruption as that which had been stated, and to this the law of the land was already competent to the full extent necessary,

so far as utterly disfranchising, and mulcting, by heavy penalties, the persons who should be proved guilty thereof, and against whom prosecutions were at this moment carrying on. But he never could agree to punish the innocent indiscriminately with the guilty, in subversion of the mild, just, and constitutional spirit of our laws, as would be the inevitable effect of a bill that must eventually disfranchise the innocent, honourable, honest, and unoffending electors of Aylesbury and their posterity, merely for the crimes of the guilty.

Lord Ouseley understood it was the intention to throw open parishes in the hundreds surrounding the borough of Aylesbury, which, in his mind, so far from remedying would rather promote the evil complained of, as it would let in the rights of election to a description of persons without property, and certainly more open to the temptation of bribery than those already charged with it; beside, he did not think that Aylesbury was so very singular a case, as to call for peculiar disfranchisement for a species of corruption, of which instances were unhappily but too numerous elsewhere. If the hon. Baronet would bring forward any general measure for the more effectual prevention of bribery and corruption, and specifically declare any degree of such delinquency which should hereafter subject a borough to disfranchisement, he should have no objection to support it.

Sir George Cornwall was in favour of the bill, and argued that the portion of corrupted votes appeared to be as 271 to 37, and said he should divide the House against the amendment.

Sir Robert Buxton supported the bill, and

Mr. P. Moore spoke against it. He contended that the law was already sufficiently strong to punish the delinquency of the parties against whom the charge could be established, against whom actions were this moment in suit for penalties to the amount of a million sterling.

Mr. Francis disapproved of the measure, as calculated to punish the virtuous for the acts of the guilty, who formed the minority of the electors of this borough, and whom, strange to tell, this bill did not propose to disqualify.

Mr. Grenfell stated that it appeared in evidence that above 200 of the voters accepted bribes at the last election, and that the system of corruption which prevailed in this borough was flagrant, extensive and uniform.

The *Master of the Rolls* reasoned against the bill. The preamble, he observed, contained only this allegation, that bribery was notorious at Aylesbury. It did not state what number were so corrupt. It was not pretended that they formed the

the majority of the electors; but even if the majority had actually accepted bribes, it would not, on that ground, be just to deprive others of those rights, which were granted not merely to the present possessors, but to generations yet to come. If, however, the minority only were implicated in the guilt alleged, this proceeding was still more unjustifiable, for it would be rather a new thing, and one directly contrary to the spirit of our constitution, or of universal equity, that one man's conduct should forfeit the rights of another, and it would be still more new and iniquitous, that the minority should forfeit the rights of the majority. The learned Gentleman contended, that this bill should, from its nature, be rather entitled an act to encourage bribery and corruption in all other boroughs; for, as it did not propose to disfranchise the guilty, but rather to put them, with many others, in competition with the virtuous majority who had defeated them at the last election, the inference from the adoption of the measure would be this, that if any bribery should take place in any borough, the man who should partake of it, and the man who should reject it, would, in the event of an appeal to the House of Commons, be put on the same footing. Thus, contrary to the general policy of legislation, a man's interest would be put on the opposite side of his duty. He cautioned the House against holding out such a proposition to the public as this bill implied, from its preamble, that the existence of "notorious bribery" in any borough, to whatever extent, would be sufficient to justify the disfranchisement of such borough. Of this mode of making legislative regulations, applicable only to particular individuals, he always disapproved. A law should be general, defining the nature of the offence, and the punishment to be applied; but in no case should it have an *ex post facto* operation, as the measure before the House proposed to take.

The *Secretary at War* observed, that all the reasoning of his learned Friend who had just sat down applied to the principle of the bill, which was precisely the same as that upon which acts of a similar nature, with respect to Shoreham and Cricklade were grounded. Of those acts he highly approved, and from entirely the same reasons which induced him to support the bill before the House.

Mr. Serjeant Best contended that this bill did not rest on grounds so strong as either of the acts alluded to by the right hon. Gentleman who spoke last, as in the case of Shoreham an allegation was made in the preamble, that the majority of the electors were corrupt, and the system which prevailed at Cricklade was notorious to every man acquainted with

with that celebrated case. With respect to the bill before the House, he saw no reason why Aylesbury should be particularly selected for disfranchisement, upon the allegation of bribery, as the same charge might be substantiated against several other boroughs; nay, had it not been very recently made against the electors of Lichester, Durham, and Windsor, by the several Committees to whom the trial of the petitions respecting those elections were referred? Independently of this consideration, and others which had been stated by the learned Gentleman (the Master of the Rolls), he objected to the bill under discussion, on this ground, that it was unreasonable; that it would, if adopted, go to decide upon a subject which at present was pending in the courts below; and that it would prejudge a question that involved a sum of no less than two millions, which formed, as he understood, the amount of the actions brought by the sitting Members for Aylesbury, and others, against such electors as were charged with accepting bribes.

Sir William Young supported the bill, upon the principles of the Grenville acts, which gave to Committees emanating from that House, the authority to propose and recommend measures for the punishment and future prevention of such flagrant instances of corruption, as those which justified the introduction of the measure before them.

Mr. Fox expressed his opinion that there was no fair necessity for the bill. He could see no reason why the case of the borough of Aylesbury should be taken out of the general rule, and not left to the operation of the existing laws to punish bribery and corruption.

Mr. W. Smith gave his concurrence to the bill, and contradicted the statement of the learned Serjeant, that the penalties sued for amounted to any thing like a million, as he had represented.

The House divided on the Marquis of Titchfield's amendment:

Against it 68—For it 49—Majority 19.

The bill was then read a second time.

On the motion of *Sir Robert Buxton*, it was ordered that counsel should be heard at the bar on Wednesday next, for the petitioners against the bill.

Several Members were added, on motion, to the Committee on the corn petitions.

Lord Folkestone moved, that there be laid before the House an account of all the unqualified captains that had been appointed to commissions in the militia under the act of last session. Ordered.

Lord

Lord Folkestone desired to be informed, why the account of the net produce of the permanent taxes, imposed since the year 1793, usually laid before the House on the 25th of March, had not yet been presented. On inquiry, he found that the delay had originated in some difficulties arising out of the consolidation act of last session. As the day had been fixed for bringing forward the budget it would be material to have that account, and an account of the produce of all the permanent taxes, on the table, as well as the account of the amount of the war taxes, up to the 5th of April.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* assured the noble Lord that the first account should be laid on the table in the course of the week, and that some of the others were already before the House, and the rest should be produced with the greatest expedition.

Mr. Secretary Yorke brought up the militia officers completion bill, which, after a few observations from Lord Folkestone, Sir John Wrottesley, and Mr. Secretary Yorke, was read a first time, and ordered for a second reading the next day.

Mr. Dent put off his motion relative to the loyalty loan till Tuesday se'nnight, when he proposed to move for a Committee of the whole House on that subject, and to refer the loyalty loan act to that Committee.

The second reading of the army of reserve suspension bill was put off from the next day to Wednesday.

ALLEGED CORRESPONDENCE OF MR. DRAKE.

Lord Morpeth, before the remaining business of the day was entered upon, hoped that he might be indulged in saying a few words upon a subject, which in his opinion deeply involved the honour and the feelings of the country. Every gentleman who heard him must be acquainted with the transactions that have recently occurred at Paris, with the numerous arrests, and the different acts of outrage, violence, and cruelty, that have there been perpetrated: they must also have remarked, that the charges upon which many of those unfortunate persons have been arrested, are considerably heightened and aggravated by the assertion of the French Government, that these imputed crimes were undertaken not only with the knowledge and privity, but by the instigation of the English Government. As long as these charges were confined to the pages of the *Moniteur*, and exhibited only the rancour and malevolence of the Consular Government, it might have been deemed prudent and wise to have passed

passed them over with silent scorn and merited contempt ; but the case was widely different at present : a correspondence has been published, purporting to be letters from the English Minister resident at Munich to a Frenchman now at Paris. These letters have been submitted to the different Ministers of the different states of Europe. The replies of these Ministers have also been published, and must have attracted very general attention. It appears, that with the exception of the Russian Minister, they have not scrupled to prejudice our cause, and in recording their opinions they have not hesitated, upon unauthenticated facts, upon unsubstantiated charges, upon unproved, and, he trusted, unprovable allegations, to impute guilt, and presume criminality. He would not dwell upon these records of injustice, these monuments of the servility and degradation of Europe : he wished he could say of Europe alone ; there was another country where he might expect to have found more freedom of opinion, more liberality of sentiment, more sense of the acknowledged and generally received principles of justice. To charges, however, so adduced, and supported upon such authority, he thought that it was incumbent upon his Majesty's Ministers to give a distinct, a satisfactory, and convincing reply : he thought that he was justified in calling upon Ministers in justice to themselves, in justice to the gentleman whose character had been so vilified and traduced, but above all, in justice to their injured and insulted country, to repel these odious imputations, and disavow the construction that had been, he trusted, so insidiously and falsely placed upon the proceedings of Mr. Drake. He thought that he was justified in calling upon them to declare to the country, to Europe, and the world, not merely that they had not planned the ambush of the conspirator, that they had not pointed the dagger of the assassin, but that in prosecution of open, manly, and legitimate war, they had not embarked in any enterprizes, they had not given any instructions, or authorized any proceedings at all inconsistent or incompatible with the practice and usages of civilized nations.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer.—Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my unfeigned obligations to the noble Lord, for affording to his Majesty's Ministers an opportunity of repelling the foulest and most infamous charge that has ever proceeded from a Government claiming to be considered as part of the civilized world ; a charge the most unfounded and diabolical, urged by a Government the most sanguinary and tyrannical, for the sole purpose, I implicitly believe, of giving

giving a colour to the commission of crimes the most heinous and atrocious that have ever disgraced and blackened human nature. As to the imputation which the author and perpetrators of that foul crime have attempted to throw on his Majesty's Government, it is almost beneath their dignity to condescend to refute it; but I think it my duty to state to this House, and to the civilized world, that no authority has been given, that no instructions have been transmitted to the English Minister at the Court of Munich, to engage in or undertake any thing, that was not strictly consistent with the most scrupulous observance of the rights of nations, and what, perhaps, is paramount to them, the duties of humanity. After having said thus much, I hope it will not be expected from me, that I should say any thing more in reply to that most false, scandalous, and malignant imputation. As to the correspondence to which the noble Lord has alluded, it is impossible for me to enter upon that subject, until some communication shall have been received from the honourable person who has been so infamously attacked in it; a gentleman for whose character I think as highly, and am certainly as solicitous, as the noble Lord, or any one in the kingdom, can be. I have perfect confidence, that the more the particulars of his conduct are inquired into, the more apparent will be the propriety of it, and the vileness and falsehood of that (as I have the best grounds to suppose) most impudent and infamous fabrication. As soon as his Majesty's Government shall have received the communications they expect from Mr. Drake, the noble Lord may be assured they will not fail to adopt the most effectual measures for asserting and maintaining the honour of the country. I must again express my obligations to the noble Lord, for affording me an opportunity of dispelling the anxiety of the country upon a subject, the honour of its representative, for which they entertain that judicious jealousy that befits a great and high-minded nation.

IRISH MILITIA.

On the order of the day being moved for the third reading of the bill for augmenting the militia of Ireland,

Mr. Calcraft rose to oppose the motion. He defended the resolutions of the colonels of militia who had assembled at the Thatched-House, against the censure that he understood they had been exposed to. He thought they were drawn so clearly and explicitly, that it was not possible to misunderstand them. It was stated in those resolutions, that

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deliberation by armed bodies was dangerous and unconstitutional; that was neither more nor less than the law of the land. He condemned the plan of the Secretary of State for the augmentation of the public force as impolitic and impracticable; and he principally objected to it as tending to raise that species of competition in the different branches of the recruiting service, as would render it impossible for us ever to acquire a considerable disposable force.

Sir William Elford opposed the bill, and principally that part of it which went to provide for the creation of this force by a bounty to be paid out of the exchequers of the united kingdom. He thought a fencible force much preferable to it, inasmuch as it was equally efficient, and was not liable to the constitutional objections that the bill before the House was subject to.

Mr. Pitt did not mean to trouble the House at length, but merely to state the ground of his opinion, that it was impossible to pass the present measure into a law. He was not one of those who were of opinion, that under all circumstances there were objections against a force in its nature not disposable. On the contrary; he felt that there might be circumstances in the situation of a country, and such he considered the circumstances in which this country was placed at the commencement of last year, which would render that description of force the most eligible, because in that description the greatest possible number could be obtained in a given time for the defence of the country. As a force for limited service afforded the best prospect of numbers, and the greatest facility in the execution, there could be no doubt of the propriety of resorting to it at first, and the similar circumstances might constitute a similar propriety: he did not think, nor did he suppose that it would be contended by any gentleman, that such a description of force was in all circumstances that which ought to be provided for the defence of the country. It would not be denied, that the regular force was that which was most to be looked to after the exigency of the moment was by the other provided; but though this was his opinion, he did not think it necessary to enlarge upon it at present, because there would be another opportunity for delivering his sentiments on that head with more propriety. He did not, however, conceive the two descriptions of force incompatible, because the limited force which was solely calculated for defence, might under certain regulations be made subservient to the increase of the regulars. The principle of the present

present measure he considered as lying within a narrow compass. It was not a question between a limited and a general force, but between two descriptions of limited force. We had two species of forces whose services were limited; first the militia, of which we had long experience; and next the army of reserve, which, in the present instance, we had for the first time tried, and which, from its services being extended to the united empire, was a better description of force than the militia. But independent of the superiority which the army of reserve in this respect had over the militia, independent of its being officered by regular officers, independent of the circumstance that the militia, in a great measure, loses its character when carried to too great an extent, and independent of the consideration that the army of reserve had been expressly intended as a means of recruiting the regulars, he could not conceive any good grounds that, in the present situation of the empire, could be laid for augmenting a force of so limited a description. By the view which he took of the measure before the House, it appeared to him, that an act which had been wisely framed to meet the exigencies of the empire, and to provide for the recruiting of the line, was to be suspended; that a machine which was in operation was to be put an end to; that plans which had been wisely devised for procuring that species of force which was under the circumstances of the empire most desirable, were to be given up, in order that something else; worse and more inefficient, might be substituted instead of them. They were to adopt a measure for the augmentation of the more limited force, because this act for raising the army of reserve had not been at once efficient, because it had been found difficult to carry it into full and complete effect in the first instance. Considering all these circumstances, he was of opinion that the present measure, viewed comparatively with that which it was proposed by his Majesty's Ministers to suspend, was one of the most objectionable that could be conceived. He did not look upon it as in any respect so eligible as the measure of which we were at present in possession, and it did not appear to him to afford so good a chance of promoting the progress of that description of force which on all hands was allowed to be most desirable. On these grounds, therefore, he should vote against the measure, not as against any augmentation of our force, but because we had every reason to expect a more effectual increase to the best description of our force, by the operation of the measure which was now proposed to be suspended.

Lord Castlereagh agreed with his right hon. Friend who spoke last, that in many points the army of reserve had great advantages over the militia, and principally as forming the *nucleus* of a regular army: but as it was impossible to procure from those two sources the force that was wanted, it became necessary to recur to the third species of force. He wished to correct a misconception which had gone abroad respecting the suspension of the army of reserve act. It was not the intention of his hon. Friend near him, to entirely suspend the operation of the act. He would not suspend the recruiting, but he meant to suspend the ballots, which created the competition, and the high bounties. To justify the present bill, the noble Lord stated, that it was in Ireland alone that it was practicable to raise men at a bounty inferior to the line or the army of reserve. It arose from that propensity which the natives of that part of the empire possessed to follow the gentry of the country in preference to regular officers, however excellent. He did not concur in those differences which had been endeavoured to be supported in respect of the mode of raising men in both kingdoms; whether the bounty was direct as in Ireland; or indirect, as in this country; the operation, as far as regarded the financial part of the system, was the same in both countries. If he thought that the present measure could possibly tend to impede the recruiting for the regular service, if it could even prevent the augmentation of that force by five thousand men, it would, in his mind, be an insuperable objection to it. But he did not think it would produce any difficulties in the way of the recruiting service for the line. He had inspected the returns of that service for a series of years, and he could perceive from them, that the army did not get fewer men, even when the competition was at the highest. He did not think it advisable to forego the advantages of the present bill. A great mass of the population of Ireland will enter into the militia, but not into the army, and to procure the men wanted the means of recruiting should be multiplied. As to the objections that had been urged against the measure on the score of finance, and as to its being at the joint expence of the united kingdom, he did not think that would weigh much with Gentlemen, particularly if they reflected that this was the part of the empire most menaced, and to which the immediate advantages of it would result: he would therefore vote for the measure.

Mr. Banks said, that Ministers were introducing a system, which

which is more limited, and less efficient than the army of reserve, in lieu of which, it was intended to be substituted: it was making the Irish militia in general liable to the service of the two countries; because a recruit will now suppose himself included, and eventually equally liable with others, and will, no doubt, require a larger bounty to induce him to enter. The deficiency occasioned by the power granted to his Majesty, ought to be supplied by a force equally good in every respect. The noble Lord had said, that it was an easy manner of disciplining the men who were newly raised; but there were other regiments, of a different description, in which they might as easily attain that discipline. We were providing for a case which was not existing, as it must be acknowledged that we are in no greater danger of invasion than we had been during the winter time. He was decidedly against the bill, as it was encouraging a species of force which was inferior to the other two—the army of reserve and the regular army, which was an object quite contrary to the intention of the Ministers themselves; at the time they were expressing a desire to increase the regular army. It had been said that the army of reserve act was not to be suspended entirely; he wished to know what was the intention of Government upon that point.

Lord Castlereagh explained, and said, it was intended to suspend the operation of the army of reserve act, in a certain degree, and to take from the counties which were deficient in their quotas, a moderate fine in lieu thereof; but not to suspend the recruiting, even for that service, at a bounty inferior to that for the regiments of the line.

Mr. Windham did not think that the noble Lord, who spoke in answer to the right hon. Gentleman opposite (*Mr. Pitt*), had been successful in combating his arguments. He would venture to object to the former bill, although it had had the ratification of that House; and he objected to the present one on account of its relation thereto. It had been said by those on the opposite bench, that he, and others in that House, were always complaining of the conduct of Ministers, and, in short, that “though they piped to us, we would not dance; and though they mourned, we would not lament.” (*A laugh*) He, however, would still observe, that he never went so far as to say, “disband the militia,” he only wished that no augmentation of that system should take place. Ministers did not call this a disposable force, but

but they said that it gave them a greater command of their disposable force. That he denied; because the one was quite inconsistent with the other. The recruiting for the one would undoubtedly interfere with the other. Every one of the Ministers on the opposite bench seemed to be, as it were, his own antagonist. Every measure they adopted, they counteracted by the adoption of some other measure. In short, they were in the situation of a man who is haunted by his own spectre; the right hand was fighting with the left. Although they had already procured no less than 400,000 volunteers, 70,000 militia, and 36,000 men for the army of reserve, they seemed still to be wishing to increase that description of force destined for a limited service. Such measures were totally at variance with one another. He disapproved entirely of such a circuitous mode of attaining the object in view, as that of raising men for the militia, as a step towards increasing the regular army. The militia were now raised by bounty, and not by ballot; and why not give the force to be raised the appellation of fencibles? An ancient Grecian, said he (alluding to Anacreon); could never produce any thing from his harp but the strain of love, notwithstanding the great number of strings on his instrument; so, in his opinion, were the Ministers always harping on the same string; they seemed to him to end always where they began. In the case of rebellion, it might be said, that it was proper to bring away the Irish militia from their own country to prevent a degree of party spirit; to prevent a regiment of Orangemen fighting against Catholics. No man would wish to augment the ferocity of such civil wars as had occurred in that country. Were any troops to be substituted for the militia, he should think that foreigners were as fit for the purpose as any other, to prevent Englishmen or Irishmen fighting against their own relations. Although, however, he might be induced to agree to the propriety of bringing Irishmen out of their own country on that account, yet by the measures adopted by the Ministers he found that other Irishmen were to be raised in their place. He doubted not that some gentlemen had been induced to vote for the bill which had lately passed, upon the principle of the Irish militia being thus always kept up at the same height. This put him in mind of a certain Gentleman, who always loved to intoxicate his guests, and the method he adopted was, by keeping his punch-bowl constantly supplied by an apparatus under his table; so that those whom he entertained

tertained were induced to drink too much, by their perceiving that the quantity of liquor never decreased. Unless the deficiency was to be supplied by foreign or regular troops, he thought Ireland would be left in a defenceless state. He saw no prospect of that reciprocity which had been so often alluded to. Such measures made it more and more impossible to procure that species of force which was wanted. Ministers first tried their hand at one mode, and finding that not to succeed altogether to the expectations of the country, they then try another, and finding that as bad, they then come to the militia system again. In short, they seemed, notwithstanding their own inclinations, to be following means to procure any thing but a regular army. He had read of a lady who said to her gallant, that he was the only man she ever knew who seemed determined not to be a gentleman. He might say of the present Ministers, that they appeared to him to be the only Ministers he ever had heard of, who were determined never to have an army.

Mr. Secretary Yorke said, that so far from his Majesty's Ministers seeming to be determined not to have a regular army, as the right hon. Gentleman (*Mr. Windham*) had expressed himself in the conclusion of his speech, he should only mention, what had been often taken notice of lately in that House, that the army was greater at this moment than it ever was at an equal period in any former war. In point of fact, the regular army was never a popular measure in this country. The plan which had been always adopted was to reduce it at the end of every war. The force proposed to be raised by this bill was acknowledged, by those who had experience of Ireland, to be the best that could be adopted in the present situation of the country, and would least of all interfere with the regular army. Ireland had, as yet, contributed less to the augmentation of the army than its proportion, when compared with Great Britain. Of 20,000 militia, 18,000 only were raised in that country at this moment: of 10,000 men for the army of reserve, only 7,000 had been procured; Ireland had therefore a great number of men yet to furnish. There were a great many men of property who would come forth and endeavour to augment the militia at the bounty proposed, who would not enter into any other kind of service. He was convinced, that by the influence of such leading Gentlemen in Ireland, the force proposed by the bill could be soon raised without at all interfering with the recruiting of our regular army.

Mr.

Mr. Fox said, he had formerly given his opinion of the general plan of defence which had been adopted, and he had listened with attention to all that had been advanced by others upon the subject. If 10,000 men were actually proposed to be raised for a limited service, he would ask, why should it be for the utmost possible limited service? We were placing ourselves in a very whimsical situation. Of 20,000 militia in Ireland, we were to bring 10,000 to this country, while, as to the other 10,000, we were making no provision or engagement at all. He wanted to know on what principle it was not also proposed to enter into a similar engagement with the new levies? It had been answered that they could not be raised so cheaply; then why not raise them as fencibles? The mode of raising this proposed augmentation was by making an addition of 30 men to each company. What was to become of the regiments which might chance to be in this country? Were their companies of seventy men to be increased to one hundred? and were the thirty additional men to be left in Ireland, or to join the others in England? They must, undoubtedly, be raised on some specific agreement, in order to procure their voluntary acquiescence. While it was said, that fencibles could not be procured to come to this country at a bounty of four guineas, how were we to get the militia to extend their services at that rate? Notwithstanding all the boast of voluntary services, Ministers seemed afraid to broach the subject to the new levies, and appeared inclined to trust, that when men had been induced to enlist into a regiment which had extended its service, they also would not refuse an equal extension. The foundation of the plan seemed to be the proposed suspension of the army of reserve act; and while Ministers thus took one system out of the market, so as not to interfere with the regular army, they immediately add 10,000 men by a mode which will interfere, more or less, with that very service, by preventing its rapid increase.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* observed, that the privates would most probably be disposed to join their comrades, and then the force would so far be augmented. It had been asked why fencibles were not raised instead of militia; but it should be recollected, that during the last war the fencibles were not raised for general service to all parts of the kingdom. The mode of raising the militia had a peculiar facility growing out of the natural influence possessed by gentlemen in their own vicinity, which was far greater than any other mode

mode that could be adopted, and it had been particularly found so in Ireland. There was likewise a very considerable difficulty in procuring officers for fencible corps, which was by no means the case with the militia. The object of this bill was to provide a militia equal to that provided during the last war; it created a force of ten thousand men, to be raised with far greater dispatch, and to be disciplined in a much quicker way than any other description of force. That an increase of disposable force was urgent no one could deny; but it was also urgent to consider the facility of its application. The hon. Gentleman had stated, that this measure would interfere with the recruiting of the regulars; so it might be thought upon general reasoning, but those Gentlemen who were most conversant with Ireland were of opinion that it would operate upon different dispositions and classes from those upon whom the recruiting system operated, and by a comparison of the levies of different years, it would appear that no material variation was likely to take place. At the end of the last war, it would be found, that of the 25,000 militia then disbanded, very few entered into the army. The presumption therefore was, that it was a different class of the people on whom this measure would operate, from those who enlisted in the regulars in the first instance. It had been argued as if we had no disposable force; but the fact was, that we had at present a disposable force of 70,000 men rank and file. Let it not, therefore, be supposed or said, that we were without a disposable force.

Mr. Canning wished to know from the right hon. Gentleman (*Mr. Addington*) if the augmentation was to extend to those regiments in this country as well as to those in Ireland? If he understood the right hon. Gentleman the augmentation was to extend to the regiments volunteering to this country as well as to those in Ireland. In this case it must be in the power of the new levies to refuse, as the terms on which they are to be raised will certainly admit of a refusal. In the event, therefore, of their refusing to come to this country to join regiments with which they are totally unacquainted, he would ask, what use would be made of them, detached as they would be in thirties, without belonging to any particular regiment? That they will volunteer, is a mere assumption for which there is no evidence. On the contrary, he would ask, what inducement they could have to volunteer to regiments already gone, and to every individual in which they might be total strangers? He wished to know,

if Ministers meant to cure a greater breach of faith by a less? Had this mode of recruiting been adopted at first, had it been resorted to a year ago, there would have been less objection to it. But his Majesty's Ministers tell us, that though the Irish militia transfer bill gives a power of accepting their offers, yet that power, perhaps, may not be used. In like manner, the House may pass an act to increase the militia of Ireland, but it will not necessarily follow that such an increase would take place, or that such an increase has been intended. To-morrow too the House would be called upon to suspend the army of reserve act, while upon the same principle, no such suspension was intended to take place.

Mr. Alexander supported the bill upon the principle that the militia service was the best calculated to raise men in Ireland. It was there very different from this country. From the want of poor's laws, and from the extensive subdivision of land, the petty tenants, as most of them were, at 5l. a year, were more under the influence of the landed gentlemen, while the young men had no regular profession, were without education, and found it necessary to enlist with a country gentleman, to secure the lease to their families.

Sir John Newport differed with the last speaker. In the north of Ireland, indeed, the militia was generally raised in the particular county; but not so in the south, to which the system of raising by bounty materially contributed.

Colonel Vereker spoke in support of the measure, as the best mode of raising additional force in Ireland. To prove the facility of raising militia in Ireland, he instanced what occurred during the time that he was Governor of Limerick, where he found great difficulties in procuring recruits for the army of reserve, though the bounty was as high as ten guineas per man. But when his own regiment of militia was marched out of the town, not less than an hundred men followed it for 20 miles, desirous of being enlisted: so much attached were the people to the militia service.

Colonel Odell stated a similar facility of raising men for the militia, in the counties of Kerry and Limerick, while there was the utmost difficulty of procuring a man for the army of reserve.

Colonel Craufurd could not conceive it possible, that while influence and attachment could procure so many followers for the Gentlemen who belonged to the militia, there were not other Gentlemen of equal influence who might be called

on

on to raise regiments for fencible service. He was sure there were many Gentlemen of influence ready to undertake the service with the fullest confidence of success.

Lord De Blaquiere thought, that though so many were disposed to follow the hon. Colonel who spoke some time back, it would not be found to be the case with every other regiment. He said it to that hon. Member's face, though he hated all flattery, that his bravery and gallantry were sufficient incentives to induce men to follow him to the field. He thought the mode of augmenting our force now proposed the worst possible mode that could be adopted. It was a measure of defence, and not of offence; and, therefore, as the Secretary of State had brought it forward as a mode of increasing our offensive force, he must, on his own principles, oppose it. Within 24, or at most, 48 hours, he was certain that Government had received offers to raise fencible corps in Ireland. If ever he gave an honest vote in that House, (*a laugh*) he should now in voting against the measure.

The question being put, the numbers appeared—

Ayes, - - - 128

Noes, - - - 107—Majority 21

The bill was accordingly read a third time and passed.

Ms. Alexander brought up the report on the Irish linen manufacture bill, which was received, and the bill ordered to be read a third time the next day.

The Committees of Supply and Ways and Means were deferred to Wednesday next.

Adjourned at 11 o' clock.

List of the above Minority.

Adair, Robert
Banks, Henry
Binning, Lord
Boote, E. W.
Buxton, Sir R. J.
Burroughs, Wm.
Berkeley, Admiral
Bruce, Lord
Bouverie, hon. E.
Barclay, Sir Robert
Bradshaw, R. H.
Cenyon, R.
Cartwright, W. R.

Canning, right hon. Geo.
Calcraft, John
Coke, Thomas
Cooke, Bryan
Courtenay, John
Creevey, Thomas
Cowper, E. S.
Craufurd, Col.
Chapman, C.
Dent, John
Dickinson, Wm.
Dickinson, W. jun
Dundas, P.

3 S 2

Dundas,

Dundas, hon. R.	Morris, Edward
Dundas, right hon. W.	Marshall, Lord
Dundas, C. L.	Newport, Sir John
Dundas, hon. L.	North, Dudley
Dundas, hon. G. H.	Northey, Wm.
Dillon, hon. Geo. A.	Osborne, John
De Blaquiere, Lord	Ord, William
Dupré, J.	Offulston, Lord
Elford, Sir Wm.	Petty, Lord H.
Ellis, C. R.	Pitt, right hon. W.
Elliot, right hon. W.	Porchester, Lord
Euston, Earl of	Proby, Lord
Ferguson, James	Portman, J. B.
Fox, hon. C. J.	Pytches, John
Francis, Philip	Raine, J.
Fitzharris, Viscount	Russell, Lord William
Folkestone, Viscount	Ryder, Richard
Fitzhugh, Wm.	Sinclair, Sir John
Gower, Lord G. L.	Sloane, Col.
Gregor, Francis	Smith, George
Grenville, right hon. T.	Smith, hon. John
Harrison, John	Smith, J. A.
Hamilton, Lord A.	Smith, William
Hippisley, Sir John	St. John, hon. St. A.
Henderson, A.	Spencer, Lord R.
Howard, Henry	Stanley, Lord
Hill, hon. Wm.	Scott, J. (Worcester.)
Johnstone George	Thellusson, P. I.
Kinnaird, hon. C.	Temple, Earl
Kirkwall, Viscount	Villiers, hon. J. C.
Kensington, Lord	Ward, hon. J. W.
Lambton, Ralph	Ward, Robert
Long, right hon. C.	Walpole, hon. G.
Lowther, John	Wharton, —
Lowther, James	Winnington, Sir E.
Latouche, —	Whitbread, S.
Laurence, Dr.	Western, C. C.
Lemon, Sir W.	Windham, right hon. W.
Morpeth, Lord	Wrottesley, Sir J.
Madocks, W. A.	Wynne, Sir W.
Milbank, Sir R.	Young, Sir Wm.
Milner, Sir William	

HOUSE

HOUSE OF LORDS.

TUESDAY, APRIL 17.

On the motion of the Lord Chancellor, the decision of the Scotch appeal, Fleming against Abercromby, was postponed till the next day.

The Irish militia augmentation bill, and several private bills were brought up from the Commons, and read a first time.

The bill for the better enforcing the canons of the church, as to the ages at which priests and deacons are to be admitted into holy orders, was read a third time and passed.

Lord Hawkeſbury ſtated it to be his intention to move for the ſecond reading of the Irish militia tranſference ſervice bill on Thursday. It was alſo his wiſh, that the other bill, now on their Lordſhips' table, for augmenting the militia force of Ireland, ſhould be read a ſecond time on the ſame day. Should, however, the former of theſe bills produce any thing of a long diſcuſſion, ſo as to induce any noble Lord to deſire that the other ſhould be poſtpoſed, it was not his intention to urge the meaſure.

The ſame noble Lord laid on the table a liſt of the corps and companies of Irish militia who had made an offer of extending their ſervices to any part of Great Britain during the war.

VOLUNTEER REGULATIONS BILL.

Lord Waiſingham brought up the report of the volunteer bill—Several of the amendments were agreed to.

On the claufe relative to exemptions from ſerving in the militia and other additional force,

Lord Grenville renewed his objections to that part of the claufe by which ſuch exemptions were confined to the additional force raiſed, or to be raiſed, by any act of the preſent ſeſſion. Such reſtriction, he maintained, was not conſiſtent with that good faith which Government ought to preſerve towards the volunteers. He therefore moved, that the words ſhould ſtand, as they had done in former acts, "raiſed or to be raiſed by any acts of the preſent, or any future, ſeſſion of Parliament."

Lord Hawkeſbury thought the amendment propoſed not only unneceſſary, but even objectionable. Left, however, it might go abroad, that by rejeſting the noble Lord's amendment, Miniſters were breaking faith with the volunteers,

teers, he would rather agree to the amendment, unnecessary as he conceived it.

After a conversation between Lords Carnarvon, Darnley, Hawkesbury, the Duke of Montrose, and the Lord Chancellor, the amendment was agreed to.

On an after part of the same clause, extending the exemption to all corps raised or to be raised,

Lord Darnley objected to that extension of the clause, and moved that it should be limited to such corps to be raised as should engage their services to the whole extent of the military district.

Lords Hawkesbury and Hobart opposed the amendment, declaring, however, at the same time, that it was hardly presumable his Majesty would accept of such limited offers of service.—The motion was then negatived.

The Duke of Montrose repeated his objections to the clause, by which commanding officers are allowed to expend for their men the marching guinea, and moved, as an amendment, that the guinea be paid to the volunteer himself.

On this the House divided. For the original clause—

Contents - - - 34

Not Contents - - - 11

On the clause relative to the billeting of the volunteers in case of actual service, there was a good deal of conversation.

Lord Grenville objected to it, as attended with material inconvenience.

The Chancellor, on the other hand, argued, that the inconvenience which would be felt was not greater than that arising from the billeting of the regulars and militia.

The House divided; the numbers were, for the original clause 40—against it 11.

Lord Auckland proposed a clause, purporting that no regulations of particular corps should be considered as binding, unless reported to the Lord Lieutenants of counties, or Deputy Lieutenants. If an interval of twenty-eight days should take place after this report, the regulations were to be held valid.

A great deal of conversation took place on this amendment. It was at length agreed to; but Lord Grenville gave notice, that he should, on the third reading, move for its being expunged from the bill.

The bill was then ordered for the third reading the next day.

HOUSE

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TUESDAY, APRIL 17.

The petition of the London clergy, presented to the House on the 22d of February last, was referred to a Committee to report thereon.

A person from the Exchequer presented accounts of the net produce of the permanent and war taxes from 5th April 1803, to 5th April 1804, which were ordered to lie on the table.

Mr. Mitford, from the commissioners of the customs of Scotland, presented accounts of the quantity of malt exported from Scotland to Ireland, of the quantity of malt carried coastwise in Scotland; and of the quantity of beer exported from Scotland to Ireland; which were ordered to lie on the table.

A petition was received from the corn growers of Yorkshire, complaining of the low price of grain; which was ordered to lie on the table.

General Tarleton moved the order of the day for the second reading of the Liverpool docks bill; which was read accordingly and referred to a Committee. Referred also to the said Committee, two petitions against certain clauses of the said bill.

On the motion of Mr. Creevey, that another petition against the principle of the bill be referred also to the said Committee,

The *Speaker* stated, that as that petition purported to be against the whole of the bill, it could not, according to the forms of the House, be transmitted to the Committee, but must lie on the table till the report of the Committee be received, which was ordered accordingly.

Mr. Secretary Yorke brought up a list of the farther regiments and companies of the militia in Ireland that had volunteered their services to the united kingdom, which was ordered to be printed.

Mr. Secretary Yorke moved the order of the day for the second reading of the militia officers completion bill.

On the question being put,

Lord Folkestone objected to the measure on the ground that it was the revival of a former act from which no benefit had been experienced. If it could be shewn that more officers had been raised for the militia by the operation of that

that act in suspending the qualifications constitutionally required of officers entering than previously to that act, he should have no objection to its renewal; but if otherwise, he thought it very improper upon slight grounds to depart from the constitutional principles of the militia system. He objected also to the bill as it contained no clause to indemnify those who have received commissions in the militia under the operation of the former act, and who being unqualified, are liable to fines since the 25th of March last, when the act expired.

The bill was then read a second time, and ordered to be committed on Thursday.

Mr. Vassittart moved that there be laid before the House the accounts of the charges on the consolidated fund; which were accordingly ordered.

Lord W. Russell moved that the report of the statute duty bill be taken into further consideration.—He afterwards moved that it be recommitted on Thursday se'night, which was accordingly ordered.

A person from the office of the Chief Secretary of Ireland presented an account of the Treasury bills outstanding for Ireland, on the 1st of January 1804.

As also an account of the returns to the Treasury of the different sums assessed by the grand juries of Ireland.

Mr. Ormsby brought up the report of the Dublin police bill, which was ordered to be engrossed.

The Secretary at War brought up the army estimates, which were ordered to lie on the table.

A message was received from the Lords, intimating their concurrence with the Irish priests and deacons orders bill.

On the motion of Mr. Corry, the Irish linen manufactory bill was read a third time and passed.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer gave notice, that he would move in the Committee of Supply, for an issue of nine millions and a half of Exchequer bills, to cover the eleven millions issued for the service of last year.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 18.

Counsel was heard in the appeal from the Court of Session in Scotland, John Hunter, Esq. against the Earl of Hunsdon. Postponed till Monday.

On the motion of the Lord Chancellor, the judgment of the Court in the case of the Earl of Hunsdon was affirmed.

the Court of Session in the cause Fleming against Abercromby, was affirmed.

On the third reading of the

VOLUNTEER REGULATIONS BILL,

Lord Grenville apologized to their Lordships for the necessity that he felt himself under of trespassing on their time, while he adverted to the clause which had been proposed by a noble Baron (*Lord Auckland*) on an opposite bench, and which had been adopted by the House, and incorporated with the bill then before them. He meant to allude to that clause which enacts, that in future all rules and regulations for volunteer corps should be transmitted by the commanding officer to the Lord Lieutenant of the county, and by him, if he should approve of the same, to the Secretary of State, for his Majesty's approbation. It was his intention to move, that that clause be expunged from the bill, not because he wholly disapproved of it, but because it did not, to his mind, sufficiently meet the evil it was intended to check and counteract. It must be in the recollection of noble Lords, that so far back as November last, that House had been unanimous, he believed, in condemning the practice of committees in volunteer corps, and of repelling that dangerous and monstrous proposition, that men with arms in their hands should ever be converted into deliberative bodies. It was unnecessary for him to enter anew into the feelings or reasons which induced that House to a general disapprobation of that principle, which, if once tolerated, there was an end to the constitution. That worst of all species of government, a military one, was the natural and inevitable result of such a principle, and military government, sooner or later, as it was well proved by historical fact, invariably terminated in despotism. To guard against the possibility of the establishment of a principle so anomalous to the practice of our free constitution, and pregnant with so much danger to it, was a duty most imperiously demanded; and he challenged the House, he individually challenged every noble Lord who agreed with him in reprobating that principle on a former occasion, to declare now, in a positive, decided, and manly way, that the Legislature of this kingdom would not tolerate, in the smallest degree, the practice of deliberation by armed bodies of men. With respect to the clause before the House, his principal objection to it was, that it was not retrospective in its effects. It provided, in some measure, but not, in his judgment, as fully as it should have done,

against the mischief of regulations, sometimes formed by the officers, sometimes by the privates, and frequently by the union of both characters. He much wished that Government had declared their determination at once, in that dignified and manly mode that became them, to crush the seeds and bud of these committees. He knew of no authority in the constitution which had the right of originating and prescribing regulations for the conduct of military bodies, but the executive power, or the authority of Parliament. The public force was placed by the practice and principles of the constitution, under the sole control of the regal authority, and neither by its letter nor spirit was it ever recognized to reside in any other. He wished that the clause had gone the length of declaring that no rules or regulations, either actually existing, or in future to be formed, should be deemed valid, without having been submitted to his Majesty for allowance or disapprobation. Many of those regulations could not at present, upon any principle of justice, be enforced. No volunteer, except he had given his individual consent to the rules of his corps, or had by some act implying such consent, expressed his adherence to them, could, as the law stood at present, be mulcted; or have any penalty inflicted on him for disobedience of them. If any magistrate should issue process for levying any fine on such volunteer, in consequence of regulations to which he had not either specifically, or by implication, expressed his consent, the courts of law would annul the decision of such magistrate, and a jury would give the volunteer aggrieved damages for a civil wrong. It was to avoid such consequences that he wished, and that he yet hoped, Parliament would think proper to declare, that all existing regulations for volunteer corps should be submitted to his Majesty, for his approbation or disallowance. As a prospective measure, the clause introduced by the noble Baron was not altogether satisfactory to his mind; inasmuch as it seemed to countenance the idea, that in future it would be competent to volunteer corps to originate rules and regulations for their conduct. Against that, as a principle, he begged leave to enter his most solemn protest. He was always of opinion, where the Crown did not interfere in the formation of such regulations, they should originate from the commanding officer, and from him alone. That opinion was the consequence of his thorough conviction, that no principle was more dangerous and opposite to the essence and true spirit of the constitution, than that an armed body should assume to

to itself a deliberative capacity. To put down, and annihilate at once the possibility of such a monster arising in this country, was the privilege of the Legislature; and he trusted that Parliament would not be intimidated from the performance of a great and necessary duty, by any apprehension of future consequences. He thought too highly of the spirit and loyalty of that great and meritorious body, the volunteers, to suppose that they would not readily and cheerfully acquiesce in any regulations that the wisdom of the Executive Government shall prescribe for them. He would not detain their Lordships any longer, but move, that the clause be expunged from the bill, for the purpose of introducing one which would embrace the ideas he had taken the liberty of submitting to the House.

Lord Auckland felt himself under the necessity of dissenting from the motion. He thought that noble Lords should pause a little before they rejected the clause of which they were in possession, and without being fully acquainted with the nature of that the noble Baron may propose to substitute in its place. He did not much relish the idea of being thus sent to open sea without chart or compass, and he therefore wished that the noble Baron had fallen upon some mode of informing the House to what precise point their course was to be directed. He saw much mischief and confusion likely to result from the retrospective operation of the clause, nor could he agree with the noble Baron, that the existing committees were pregnant with the constitutional inconveniences he had so strongly described; and above all, he deprecated the possibility of setting the volunteers loose from the regulations they were acting under, even improper as in some instances they possibly might be. He could not concur in the exaggerated picture the noble Baron had drawn of the dangers to be apprehended from a deliberative capacity, residing under certain restraints and qualifications in a body of men so patriotically and loyally constituted as the volunteers. There was no wound, there was no sore that required the extraordinary application recommended by the noble Baron, who seemed to think that there existed in this part of the volunteer system,

————— *— Medicabile vulnus
Ense recidendum, ne pars sincera trahatur
Cuncta prius tentanda.*

He would not subscribe to that opinion, and seeing, there was no necessity for carrying the principle to the utmost extent

tent that it was meant to stretch it, he would oppose the motion of the noble Baron.

Lord Grenville explained, that he could not, consistent with order, submit his ideas on the subject in the form of a motion to the House, until the clause objected to had been previously expunged, nor could he regularly communicate it to the noble Lords unless he had read it as part of his speech. However, with the permission of the House, he would state the substance of what he meant to propose, in case his motion for expunging the clause should be carried. It was, 1st, that the rules and regulations of all volunteer corps, actually embodied, should, within one month from the passing of the bill, be transmitted through the commanding officer and the Lord Lieutenant of the county, to the Secretary of State, for his Majesty's approbation: 2dly, that for the future no regulation by a volunteer corps should be valid without such allowance on the part of the King: and, lastly, that all such regulations should originate with the commanding officer, and none other. He was particularly anxious with regard to the establishment of his last proposition, because he thought he could perceive a disposition in the noble Baron to compromise the practice, and to admit that although it would be proper that the originating power should reside in the commanding officer, yet that cases may arise where it would be prudent in him to consult and refer to the collective opinion of the corps.

Lord Hawkebury agreed in many of the opinions of the noble Baron. He wished that those regulations had never existed; but as Parliament, for some years past, had acquiesced in them, he could not see upon what principles of consistency or public faith it could now be endeavoured to put an end to them. The mischiefs which the noble Lord apprehended from those regulations were not, he would contend, so probable as were supposed, and for this strong reason, that whenever they should be placed on permanent duty, or called out in case of appearance of invasion, there would be an end to all their rules and regulations, and they would, in either of those two instances, be subject to the operation of the mutiny laws, like the rest of his Majesty's forces. As the clause of his noble Friend sufficiently provided against future dangers, and as from the tried prudence and loyalty of the volunteers he was justified in presuming that by far the greatest part of them would be ready to recast their regulations, or to adopt such alterations as his Majesty should recommend,

recommend, he would persist in supporting the original clause.

The *Duke of Montrose* lamented that either the preceding or the present Government should have, either directly or by connivance, sanctioned the practice of allowing men with arms in their hands to assume a deliberative capacity. He thought it the duty of Parliament to crush, by their formal and open declaration, the possibility of it for the future. As the clause intended to be proposed by the noble Baron would most fully effect that, it should have his support, and he would therefore, although he did not wholly disapprove of the present clause, vote for the motion for expunging it.

Lord Hobart did not mean, after what had been urged in reply to the noble Baron who made the original motion, to enter at large upon the subject, but he rose for the purpose of repelling some observations thrown out by the noble Baron, tending, in his judgment, to produce all the mischiefs they purposed to avert. He alluded to that part of his argument, wherein he called upon Parliament to do their duty, regardless of any consequences that might follow; and not to have it imagined that they were to be intimidated, by the numbers or extent of the volunteer force, from crushing their committees, and abolishing the practice of deliberating. He could not sit silent, and here it asserted, that a British Legislature could be ever deterred from the performance of its duty, or the maintenance of its authority, by any body or bodies of men. He thought too well of the principles of loyalty and patriotism by which the volunteers were actuated, to suppose that they would ever be guilty of the crime of rashly setting themselves up against Parliament; but if they should, he trusted that Parliament would always be found competent to the task of putting them down. When the volunteers of Ireland, during the period that a noble Earl near him (*Lord Westmoreland*) was Lord Lieutenant there, were engaged in some proceedings contrary to the existing laws, the Parliament of that country exerted the powers with which the constitution had invested it, and the volunteers were suppressed. Should the same circumstances require it, as long as the same cause produced the same effect, a similar result would attend a similar attempt by any description of force in this part of the empire. The original clause would, by its operation, accomplish, by gentler, and as effectual means, all that the noble Baron promised to himself from the adoption of his substitute for it, and therefore it should have his support.

The

The question was then put on the motion for expunging the clause:

Non-contents, 25—Contents, 10—Majority, 15.

A new clause was proposed by Lord Grenville, and adopted.

Some other amendments were made, and the bill was passed, and ordered to be sent back to the Commons as amended.

Lord Hobart moved that, as the printed copies were on the table, the Irish militia augmentation bill should be read a second time the next day, and that the Lords should be summoned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 18.

Lord Marham, as chairman of the Committee on the Middlesex election, reported that Benjamin Weal having been duly summoned to attend the said Committee, had neglected to obey the said summons. On the motion of his Lordship, and conformably to the precedents in such cases, it was ordered that the Speaker do issue his warrant for taking the said Benjamin Weal into the custody of the Serjeant at Arms.

Mr. Penruddock Williams presented a petition from the debtors confined in the county gaol of Wilts. Ordered to lie on the table.

The Secretary at War stated, that the accounts ordered on the motion of an hon. Admiral (Berkeley), relative to the barrack department, were more extensive than the hon. Admiral, on consideration, thought necessary. He therefore, with the consent of the hon. Admiral, moved, that the said order be discharged, and that an account be presented of all barracks hired by Government, and given up, together with the time of giving them up respectively. Ordered. This account was afterwards presented by Colonel Gordon from the barrack office, and ordered to lie on the table.

On the motion of Mr. Corry, the House went into a Committee on the Irish revenue regulation acts.

A resolution for continuing and amending the acts 42 and 43 Geo. III. for the better collection of the revenue in Ireland, was agreed to, and the report ordered to be received the next day.

Several

Several petitions relative to corn, grain, and malt; were referred to the Committee on the corn laws.

On the motion of Mr. Elliot it was ordered, that the proper officer should lay before the House an account of the particular sums charged under the heads of pensions, allowances, gratifications, and incidents, on the different departments of the revenue, barrack board, and board of works, in Ireland, in the different years, from 1st January 1801, to 1st January 1804, specifying each year.

ARMY OF RESERVE SUSPENSION BILL,

Mr. Secretary Yorke moved the order of the day for the second reading of the bill for suspending the army of reserve act.

Mr. Long rose merely to state, that a right hon. Friend of his (*Mr. Pitt*), who had given notice of his intention to enter into the discussion of this bill in its present stage, was prevented by a slight indisposition from coming down to the House that day. He could assure the House, that his right hon. Friend was extremely anxious to deliver his sentiments at large upon the subject. The House would recollect, that his right hon. Friend had given a notice on this subject before the recess, and that he had only put it off at the desire of his Majesty's Ministers, and to wait to see whether this measure would answer the object he had in view. He had authority to state on the present occasion, that in the next stage of this bill his right hon. Friend would attend to offer his sentiments at large, and to take the sense of the House upon the measure. It would be convenient to gentlemen, if the right hon. Secretary of State would mention the day on which it was intended that the bill should be further proceeded upon. It would not be convenient, he believed, that it should be proceeded upon the next day, as for the day after (Friday) an hon. Gentleman (*Mr. Fox*) whom he did not then see in his place, had given notice of a motion which was likely to produce much discussion; but he understood that hon. Gentleman had no objection to accommodate the House by deferring his motion for a few days, if it should be the wish of the House and his Majesty's Ministers to proceed with the present bill on Friday. He wished some of the hon. Gentleman's friends who were present, to state what they understood as to his concurrence.

Mr. Secretary Yorke was sorry for the cause of the right hon. Gentleman's (*Mr. Pitt's*) absence on the present occasion.

sion. He wished the discussion to take place on as early a day as possible. The next day the bill could not be proceeded upon, because the clauses which it was intended to propose in the Committee were not yet framed. He had no objection to the arrangement for Friday, if the hon. Gentleman who had given notice of a motion for that day (Mr. Fox) concurred in it. But he conceived it to be most material, that the consideration of the subject to which that hon. Gentleman's notice referred should not be put off to any distant day.

Mr. Adair stated Mr. Fox's consent to defer his intended motion from Friday till Monday.

The *Secretary at War* expressed a disposition to favour the arrangement, by putting off his intended motion on the army estimates from Monday till Wednesday.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* found it necessary to put off from Wednesday next, the consideration of the ways and means of the year. Information was expected from Dublin, as to the part of the loan contracted for in Ireland; and it was necessary that what had been done there should be known, before any thing could be done here as to the sum remaining to be contracted for. This information was expected the next day; and if it arrived, he should be ready on Wednesday to see the Gentlemen who were disposed to contract for the sum that would be wanted here. Three or four days would then be necessary for consideration and arrangement. He would therefore defer his notice from Wednesday till Monday se'nnight. His right hon. Friend (the Secretary at War) had already signified his willingness to accommodate the arrangement of the discussions which it was wished to go into, by putting off his motion on the army estimates till Wednesday. On that day it was meant to move the army extraordinaries. Also, he thought it necessary to state at the same time, that it was desirable that the motion of which notice had been given for Friday (Mr. Fox's), should be brought forward as early as possible.

Sir Robert Buxton rose, not to go into any argument on the merits of the bill then, though he declared himself decidedly an enemy to it; but he wished to ask a question with regard to one of its principles, namely, the mode by which the money was to be assessed, for defraying the quotas claimable under the bill. If the assessments were to be on counties at large, he had no objection to that part of the principle, but if on parishes merely, he had strong objections.

Mr.

Mr. Secretary Yorke said, if the hon. Baronet had looked into the bill, he would have found the assessment was intended on paper, in the nature of poor's rates.

The bill was read a second time, and committed for Friday.

EXCHEQUER BILLS.

The House resolved itself into a Committee of Ways and Means, Mr. Alexander in the chair.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* stated that, on a former day, he had apprized the House of his intention to move, in the Committee of Ways and Means this day, a vote for eleven millions, to be raised by Exchequer bills, to discharge the outstanding Exchequer bills not provided for, and to replace those that would by such means be withdrawn from the market. Since that notice, a conference had been held with persons on the part of the Bank; it was proposed by the Bank to defer the payment of a million and a half till next year, towards the renewal of the Bank charter, which had been agreed to, so that it would be necessary only to raise nine millions and a half. This he would propose to do by two bills: the one for raising eight millions, and the other for a million and a half. He felt it necessary, at the same time, to state, that there was no intention of funding any part of the outstanding Exchequer bills, and to say also, that there were no Exchequer bills now outstanding of an older date than of the 5th of April 1802. He concluded by moving two resolutions, agreeably to his statement.

Mr. Johnstone thought the sum proposed was much greater than was necessary; as it appeared from the papers on the table, that of the eighteen millions of Exchequer bills that had been issued, only 1,400,000l. had been paid, which left a balance still extant of 16,600,000l. which, with some other sums he stated, made up the sum 24,600,000l. raised last year. Of the extant sum it was proposed to pay off eleven millions; and now it was proposed to issue eight millions more, and leave a million and a half in the Bank. There were seven millions besides, he would admit, in the Bank, under different acts, that would not come into the market; but still, he contended, there would be sixteen millions afloat, which he considered a great deal too much. Besides, it was much too early in the session to resort to this mode of raising money, and contrary to the precedent of last year, when the right hon. Gentleman did not propose his Exchequer-bill loan till the 13th of July, at which time it was only proposed to issue five millions. It was necessary for the House to be acquainted, in the first instance, with the budget for the year, in order to judge

whether the ways and means were likely to bear out the propriety of the present measure. By voting so large an issue so early in the session, the public would lose a great share of the advantages which would otherwise arise upon the negotiation of the loan, which he thought should be much larger in proportion than the Exchequer bills, which ought to be narrowed in their issue. He owned he had not had time to look accurately into the papers upon the table, but those were the observations which struck his mind at the moment.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* replied, that the hon. Gentleman not having accurately examined the papers accounted for the error into which he had fallen; for if he had accurately examined them, he would have found, that out of the whole outstanding sum, 10,663,600*l.* was provided for upon the malt tax of 1802, 1803, and 1804; the property and personal tax of 1803 and 1804; and the war-taxes of the latter year; leaving fourteen millions to account for, of which three millions were locked up in the Bank, provided for upon the taxes of 1806, and thus leaving a residue extant of only eleven millions, of which one million and a half was to be held back by the Bank, as already stated; and consequently the sum to be raised was only nine millions and a half, for that amount of Exchequer bills actually afloat. He must entirely differ from the hon. Gentleman's argument, that the loan should be great, and the issue of Exchequer bills small; for the latter was a very important resource to Government, and so popular at market as never to have been at a discount. The true proportion must depend entirely upon the quantity at market, and the preference the public gave. This he conceived an answer to the hon. Member; and with respect to the period of the year at which it was proposed to make the issue, he conceived the hon. Member equally in error, when he asserted that it differed totally from the precedents of former years, as on the 5th of April 1801, there were two millions of Exchequer bills more afloat than at the present moment. This very day too the Bank had issued 700,000*l.* for the purpose of discharging outstanding Exchequer bills of 1803; and it was therefore necessary to keep up the supply at market upon a branch of the public securities so much in the public preference.

A conversation arose between Mr. Rose and Mr. Vansittart, in which the former wished for an account of the various issues of Exchequer bills since 1801, with the aids on credit on which they were voted; and Mr. Vansittart stated those issues with the aids.

The

The resolutions for granting 8,000,000*l.* and 1,500,000*l.* to be raised by loan on Exchequer bills were then agreed to.

On the motion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, it was agreed, that the charges of the pay and clothing of the militia of Great Britain for one year ending the 5th of March 1805, be defrayed out of the monies arising from the consolidated fund. Also, the allowances to adjutants and serjeant majors of the militia of Great Britain, and the allowances to subaltern officers of the said militia, for the same period. Similar resolutions were agreed to relative to the pay and clothing and allowances to the officers of the Irish militia.

The report was ordered to be received the next day.

Mr. Vansittart presented an account of all the additional charges on the national debt, loans, and annuities; and also an account of the estimated produce of the duties for defraying the charges of the same for the year ending the 5th of Jan. 1804. He stated, that the difficulties created by the consolidation of the duties had impeded the making up of this account, which was still imperfect, as the account from Scotland had not been received, but every exertion would be used to complete it. Ordered to lie on the table,

Mr. Rose observed, that from the accounts before the House, it was impossible to form an opinion of the exact state of the revenue, particularly with respect to the produce of the taxes postponed in 1803, and paid in 1804. The right hon. Gentleman had adverted to this point in the early part of the evening, and not being satisfied with the explanations then given, now made a motion for additional accounts to elucidate this point; but being assured by *Mr. Vansittart* that every account that was usual, and some that were not presented in any former year, were now either before the House, or in preparation, and to be laid on the table probably the next day, he withdrew his motion.

Mr. Rose then moved, that there be laid before the House, an account of all Exchequer bills, issued from 5th April 1798, up to the present time, shewing the amount in each year, and distinguishing each issue, and the funds on which it was charged. Ordered.

Mr. Dampier was heard as counsel on the second reading of the Aylesbury election bill. The bill was read a second time, and committed for Friday se'nnight.

The Marquis of Titchfield, by assenting to the commitment of the bill, wished to be understood not to preclude himself from opposing it in a future stage.

It was ordered on the motion of Sir George Cornewall, that

no new writ be issued for the election of a member for Aylesbury, in the room of Mr. Bent, till Monday, 14th May.

The Dublin police bill was read a third time, and passed.

Mr. Vansittart presented several accounts relating to his Majesty's foreign settlements. Ordered to lie on the table.

Mr. Calcraft put off till Monday, in the Committee of Supply, the motion of which he had given notice for Friday, relative to the pay and clothing of the volunteers.

Mr. Kinnaird put off till the same day a motion relative to the half-pay of officers engaged in volunteer corps, of which he had given notice for Friday.—Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

THURSDAY, APRIL 19.

Counsel was heard in continuation for the appellants in the chancery appeal, Richardson against the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Postponed till Wednesday.

The bills on the table were forwarded.

MOTION FOR DISPATCHES RELATING TO HOSTILITIES, SENT TO INDIA.

The *Earl of Carlisle* observed, that as the state of the country, as connected with the conduct of Ministers, must, at no very distant day, be brought under their Lordships' consideration, he would not then trespass on their time by any observations on that subject. He rose merely to make a motion for certain papers, to the production of which he did not apprehend Ministers would oppose any reasonable objections. He should therefore move without further preface, That an humble address be presented to his Majesty, praying that he may give orders that the dates of all dispatches transmitted either by land or sea, by Government to India, previous to his Majesty's message of the 10th of March 1803, be laid on the table for the information of their Lordships; and the dates also when they were received by the persons to whom they were severally addressed: and that the dates of the dispatches transmitted between that period and the commencement of hostilities, together with the dates of the receipt of such in India, be also laid on the table.

Lord Hawkesbury thought it his duty to resist the motion of the noble Earl, not that there could be any great objection to grant the information he seemed anxious to obtain, but that it was contrary to all precedent, and the constant practice of

of the executive government. He would not deny but many occasions might arise, on which it would be incumbent on Ministers to accede to propositions for the production of public documents. On all questions relating to the public revenue, to the application of the expenditure of that revenue, or to the magnitude and disposal of the public force, it was competent for any noble Lord to move for such papers as tended to explain them, and it would be indecorous in Ministers to oppose the production of them. But where no ground of accusation had been laid down, and where the motives for producing them were only to be discovered in vague and uncertain rumour, he thought it neither parliamentary nor prudent to trouble his Majesty with an address for such purposes; he would therefore give his dissent to the motion of the noble Earl.

The *Earl of Carlisle* could not agree with the noble Secretary of State as to the principle which he had laid down, that Ministers were to communicate or withhold information at their discretion, on all public occasions, except such as arose out of matters that were fairly before Parliament. They, the hereditary council of his Majesty, had a right to demand information, whenever the interests of either the Sovereign or the State were concerned; and it was the duty of Ministers to communicate it, except the publicity of it might operate to the disadvantage of the public service. He would even maintain, in opposition to the noble Lord, that public rumour may be sometimes a good ground for requiring information. He asked, was it not notorious, that in all the circles, from the highest to the lowest in this country, it was rumoured, and generally believed, that Ministers had been extremely remiss in conveying intelligence to India of approaching hostilities? It was easily to be ascertained, so negligent had they been in this respect, that information of the war had been received from England, by private merchants in India, *seventeen days* before the dispatches of Government arrived there. To what but this negligence, on the part of Government, was the escape of the French squadron at Pondicherry owing? Admiral Linois, with an inferior force, was at anchor within the British fleet under the command of Admiral Rainier, and from some information he had received, he had cut his cables, and was, perhaps, at this very moment, engaged in active and successful hostility against some of the most valuable of our settlements in that part of the world. Surely if the English Admiral had been apprized of the probability, much
itself

less the actual commencement of a war, he would, as it would have been his duty to have done, detained the whole of the French Squadron. The public had a right to be satisfied on this point, and therefore, unless Ministers produced some better arguments against his motion, he must persevere in it.

Lord Hawkebury must still persist in opposing the motion; however, he had no hesitation in saying, that pending the negotiation, and previous to his Majesty's message, dispatches had been sent to India with all possible celerity, and by every means of communication, to apprise our naval and military commanders there, of the state of it, and the probable resumption of hostilities. His Majesty's Government, at least that department of it, had also, in a subsequent period of the negotiation, made similar communication; and when hostilities actually commenced, they transmitted intelligence of it, by all means in their power, to India.

Earl Spencer expressed much surprise at the determination of Ministers to oppose the motion of his noble Friend. They had, if he was well-informed, and he drew his information from a source which, though not official, was, notwithstanding, in his opinion, too authentic to be questioned, been guilty of unpardonable neglect in not conveying the earliest intelligence of the war to our settlements in India. The official dispatches were transmitted by a frigate which had to see a convoy, that was put under her protection, safe into Lisbon; by which means an unavoidable delay of at least 16 or 18 days was produced. If he would credit authority he had no reason to doubt, Admiral Rainier was not apprized, on the 12th of August, of what had taken place in Europe on the 10th of March, full five months before. Suppose the circumstances of the two fleets had been different, and that Admiral Rainier, with an inferior force, had been anchored inside the French Squadron, could any one imagine that Admiral Linois, on the 12th of August, on the night of which he slipped his cables, would have hesitated on the capture of the British Squadron? There was certainly great blame imputable to some quarter, and it was the duty of the House to examine it thoroughly.

Lord Hobart opposed the motion, and maintained that there had been no negligence on the part of Ministers. The frigate which carried out dispatches, sailed direct for India, and made an extraordinary quick passage. Our commanders there had timely notice of the state of affairs in Europe, and instructions for their conduct in case of the resumption of hostilities. As to the escape of Admiral Linois' Squadron, he
was

was sure no blame could attach either to the Executive Government, or to his Majesty's Commander in those seas upon that account. In fact, Admiral Rainier was apprised of the probability of the recommencement of the war when the French Squadron arrived at Pondicherry, and it was actually under consideration to detain Admiral Linois, when he was so fortunate as to make his escape.

The Earl of Carnarvon—If there was no argument adduced but what may be drawn from the unwillingness in Government to produce papers whose dates of transmission and reception are the principal objects desired, and against which the slightest objection is not pretended, I should strongly be of opinion that the House should require their production; but more substantial grounds to support my noble Friend's motion cannot exist than that of a general prevalent opinion that Admiral Rainier was left till the 12th of August, without an official communication of the situation in which this country was involved, and without instructions for his conduct, and that this omission enabled Admiral Linois to escape with his Squadron from the situation in which he might have been detained. The noble Secretary of State has sufficiently confirmed the supposed fact, by confining his affirmation to the information which he says Admiral Rainier had of the rupture with France, without stating it to be official; and certainly it was not accompanied with instructions how to act; for the noble Secretary infers the knowledge of Admiral Rainier, from the uncertainty and doubt prevailing in his mind how he should act, under the circumstances of probable hostility, Admiral Linois' Squadron being in his power. The result of this is, that report has probably accurately stated the fact, that Admiral Rainier received private information of a rupture, long before he received official dispatches, which were sent by a frigate impeded by its convoy, and directed to touch at various places in its way; and that he did not receive official information and instructions till Admiral Linois had received official information, and in consequence departed suddenly and privately at midnight. This, if true, is a gross neglect, which merits the most serious inquiry. The capture of the French fleet commanded by Admiral Linois must have been of the utmost importance. The mischief which our trade may suffer from their escape is the probable consequence of this criminal neglect; and strong reports exist that our India trade has greatly suffered; other mischiefs which may follow are incalculable. It is admitted

sed by the noble Secretary that private information did arrive in time, but not of sufficient authority to enable Admiral Rainier to have detained Linois' Squadron in port. It is clear from his acknowledged doubts and uncertainty, that he had no instructions how to act, which occasioned his uncertainty and the loss of that advantage. That Admiral Linois received his official information sooner, his escape and a midnight departure proves. Private information received (which could have no other effect than strong and probable report) is a proof that official information might have been received; and private or even official information received, which left him in uncertainty how to act, is a proof that no proper instructions were sent. I am therefore fully satisfied, that the motion of my noble Friend should be supported, and that the ministerial motive for withholding the information is the criminal matter they will expose.

Lord Harrowby declared, that on the first view of the matter he was inclined to think the motion not sufficiently warranted. From the grounds, however, which had since been stated in support of it, he could not help giving it his decided support.

The House then divided on Lord Carlisle's motion :

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Majority against Ministers,

1

IRISH MILITIA.

Lord Hobart, previous to the second reading of the bill to enable his Majesty to accept the services of the Irish militia, moved that his Majesty's message on the loyal and spirited offers of the Irish militia should be read. His Lordship then declared, that he presumed there would be no difference of opinion in that House, with respect to the principle which gave rise to the present bill, and which, carried to a further extent, would sanction the policy of occasional interchanges of the militia of the two countries. But that, was not the question now before them. The prudence or necessity of such reciprocity was not now to be discussed; but as it appeared on the face of the bill before the House, they were called upon merely to determine, whether they would
or

or would not enable his Majesty to avail himself of the spirited offers that had been made to him from motives of loyalty to his person, and of kindness and attachment to the welfare and interests of this part of the empire. As he presumed there could be no difference of sentiment on that point, however there may be on others, he would no longer detain their Lordships, but move that the bill be read a second time.

Lord Boringden felt himself under the necessity of opposing the second reading of the bill, upon many considerations, but principally two, which in his mind were decisive against the measure. One was, that it would tend, in some measure, to subvert the principles upon which the militia force was originally established; and the other was, that it was withdrawing a force which, however inconsiderable in itself, was necessary for the defence of Ireland, and could afford no material addition to the force already collected for the defence of Great Britain. His Lordship was no enemy to the principle that all parts of the united kingdom should assist each other reciprocally, but he would rather see that disposition manifested by other measures than a mere interchange of their several militia forces. He wished really to see the principles of the union fairly acted upon. It was now four years since that great political change had been effected, and what, he would ask, had the Government done for Ireland? If he could argue from certain facts, when he considered the correspondence that had passed between a noble Peer of that House (*Lord Redesdale*) and the Earl of Fingal, and that the former noble Lord still remained in a high official situation in that country, he was justified in entertaining some doubts of the intentions of Ministers towards it. If Ministers approved of the conduct of that noble Lord, why not declare so? If they did not, it was incumbent upon them to disavow the opinions he had promulgated, and to recall him. But this, however desirable in point of justice or of policy, he despaired of seeing accomplished, when he recollected that the great vital and essential principle upon which the present Ministers held their official situations was opposition to the only measure that could give satisfaction or permanent tranquillity to Ireland.

The *Duke of Cumberland* would occupy but a very small portion of their Lordships' time. He rose for the purpose of expressing his approbation of the bill, as tending to establish

that principle, which he hoped to see, within a short time, extended much further. It was his anxious wish, that the two countries, which had but one common interest, should, whenever it was necessary, interchange their militias. Since they were become one united kingdom by law, he trusted that they would not be separate either in sentiment or practice. He thought no more distinction, in any respect whatever, should exist between them, than between any two neighbouring counties of Great Britain; and, therefore, as this measure would tend to establish that cordiality and acquaintance between them, that was so desirable in every point of view, it had his hearty concurrence.

The *Marquis of Headfort* supported the bill, and expressed his regret, that the great Minister who had brought about the measure of union, was not at present at the head of his Majesty's councils.

Earl Fitzwilliam opposed it, as interfering with the principles upon which the militia of England was originally formed, and by which they were governed, and as derogatory from the honour of the nation, which possessing 380,000 volunteers, 70,000 militia, and 44,000 infantry, with a due proportion of artillery and cavalry, still was represented to be under the necessity of accepting the services of 10,000 Irish militia.

The *Duke of Norfolk* would vote against the measure upon constitutional grounds, although he acquitted Ministers of any blame whatever in the transaction, which was in some measure, he had reason to suppose, forced upon them. He could not concur in the wish of a noble Marquis for the return to power of a Member of another House, much less in his opinion of his merits as a minister. He thought that the constitution had been more violated, the country more oppressed and impoverished by taxes, and the state of Europe reduced to more disgrace and humiliation by his measures, than by the rashness or incapacity of all the administrations that had preceded him.

The *Earl of Limerick* supported the bill, and retorted with much force the arguments advanced by a noble Earl, that the practice of volunteering tended to counteract that most dangerous of all principles to a free Government, the principle of deliberation by armed bodies. He was sure, when the noble Lord had made that observation, that the extraordinary resolutions entered into

into by a number of militia colonels at the Thatched House, in which the noble Earl bore so conspicuous a part, did not offer themselves to his recollection. He could see no difference between deliberation by commanders, and deliberation by common soldiers. The bill had his concurrence, because it would promote that which was the earnest wish of his heart, the full political identity of both parts of the kingdom.

Lord Carleton readily admitted, that such was the state of defence in which this part of the united kingdom was placed, that there did not exist any absolute necessity for the transfer of 10,000 militia from Ireland. Yet he was decidedly of opinion, that when a voluntary offer of service was made, like that which had occurred in the present instance, it should not be rejected. It would, in fact, materially tend to the consolidation of the act of union, by shewing the mutual confidence with which different parts of the same empire were animated. With respect to the observations which had fallen from a noble Lord, on the correspondence that had passed between two noble Lords in Ireland, one of whom filled a most important office, he had merely to remark, that such comments were not warranted by the incidental mention of the correspondence, since it was not fairly before their Lordships, and could not be made the groundwork of a charge.

The *Lord Chancellor* felt himself peculiarly called upon to address a few words to their Lordships in consequence of the allusion which had been noticed. The character of that noble Lord, with whom it was one of the greatest pleasures of his life to live on terms of the strictest intimacy, stood as high for honour and integrity as any other in the united kingdom; and whatever observations the correspondence might have given rise to, he was confident that there was nothing in any of the circumstances which could in the slightest degree contribute to injure the distinguished reputation his noble friend was universally acknowledged to possess. It was, he could not avoid saying, one of the characteristics of the times, that a correspondence which in former instances could not, unless stolen from the pocket of either of the noble Lords, have found its way into the world, should now be made public as a matter of course. It was also extraordinary, that a charge should be preferred against his noble friend, upon grounds which were clearly surreptitious, and which could not, with any propriety or consistency, furnish a

subject of censure or comment in that House, since they could not be brought forward as the basis of a motion for an address to his Majesty. He had thought it incumbent upon him, since the topic had been introduced, to say these few words in vindication of his noble friend, who, if he had erred, must have erred only from a deep and honest conviction that his exertions and advice would produce the most beneficial effects in that country, where he had the honour to fill a very high situation under the Government. As to the sentiments which had been imputed to his noble Friend, it was sufficient to state, that he had been here the best friend to those very men whom he was now accused of persecuting; and that in all the measures which had been adopted of late years for their relief and toleration, he had himself been personally and warmly engaged in the passing of the different bills, which they conceived so intimately connected with their happiness and interests. With regard to the bill before the House, he did not see it in the same objectionable point of view in which it appeared to present itself to some other noble Lords. He should not for a moment hesitate to say, that the principle of an armed body deliberating was improper and unconstitutional; but it was at the same time to be understood, that the power of deliberating might be occasionally exercised by armed bodies, when it could alone arise from, and be regulated by, the force and urgency of peculiar and extraordinary circumstances. His Lordship having considered the operation of the bill as essentially connected with the safety and welfare of the two countries, concluded with saying that it should have his cordial support.

The Earl of Carnarvon—I have long entertained principles decisive of my opinion against this bill, of the introduction of the Irish militia into this country on its internal demerits, but the arguments by which it has been defended have greatly augmented my objections. It has been openly stated, by an illustrious person, that he considered the measure as a prelude to a reciprocity of service, and interchange of militia of the two countries. Ministers avow openly that they entirely approve of the principle which blends the service of the militia of the united kingdoms, but that they do not think that it could now be prudently urged, as not at this moment consonant to the opinions and feelings of those who fill the higher stations in the English militia. I am happy to hear that such opinions and feelings are known to prevail; I trust that they will continue to protect, and

and I hope will in the end restore, the constitutional principles of the militia to its original spirit. If I had no other objections to the introduction of this bill, I should be induced to resist this prelude to an intended evil for its bad intentions. Before I enter farther into the subject I must observe, that the learned Lord on the woolsack, who rose with a proper warmth to protect the character of a learned friend whom he thought attacked, seems to have mistaken the observation of the noble Lord who sits near me (Lord Boringdon): as far as I could collect from what he said, the noble Lord did not, in the slightest degree, impeach that learned Lord's character or conduct, for he gave no opinion on the papers or persons alluded to, but only observed, that those who expected a perfect consolidation of the union between the two countries to take place, would be disappointed, as long as the letters which had made their appearance, and agitated the public mind, remained unexamined and unnoticed by the Government of the country. The noble Baron certainly did not bring into question either the truth or falsehood of the papers, or merits or demerits of the several parties involved; I trust also that I shall not be understood to convey any blame on any person, when I deduce a strong argument against this bill, from the opinion of the same learned Lord, as it appears in those letters against a set of men, who most probably compose the whole, or a very great part of the 10,000 Irish militia proposed to be transferred to Great Britain by this bill: certainly the charge contained in those letters, by a person so highly situated and furnished with information, must weigh strongly as an objection against the admission of regiments so formed. The subject before us has been discussed under singular impressions which mark that no sound ideas of a militia are entertained. All military corps, however raised, and with whatever views, have been considered as similar, as if all were equally to be classed as army. The noble Marquis (Headfort) says, that if the Gentlemen who compose the militia of Great Britain dislike passing the sea and defending Ireland, now part of the united empire, they are not fit to be soldiers; this observation, and all the arguments I have yet heard, would send the militia to Jamaica, to Ceylon, or any part of the empire at large. Other noble Lords have conceived the dislike to receive the generous offers of service from the Irish militia as a prejudice against the natives of Ireland and the union. I have always considered the militia

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as a body perfectly distinct from the army, and have resisted their assimilation to the army. It is not that I consider the individuals who compose the ranks of the militia, or the officers who command them, as in any thing individually better or different from those who compose the army; they are drawn from the same materials, and are equally respectable, but they are formed and arranged on a different model, both adapted to the stations they were meant to fill. The militia is calculated for a garrison of home defence, drawing into useful occupation those persons who would not enter the military line as a profession, but were willing to perform a limited service, absolutely necessary to be performed by some persons; to furnish a protection in the time of peace against the sudden emergencies of commencing hostilities, and a sufficient garrison, in its original numbers of 32,000 men, for the two principal naval depôts, and capable, to the extent of their numbers, during a war, to perform most essential service in case of invasion: by their land qualification, not wanting, and by their formation, cut off from all possible military promotion, they necessarily formed a corps not so obviously influenced by personal views, nor looking up to the executive Government for advancement. Their independence, local attachment and property, supply them with patriotism and personal influence, which cannot but be of more constitutional security in the defence of the country, to a certain extent, than any army of persons professionally engaged. But the extension of this military corps, (to numbers beyond a moderate insular garrison) either in order to destroy the distinct spirit and popular principles of the militia, by confounding them gradually with the army, or from the most impolitic and mean pecuniary motives, preferring a cheaper levy of less use for the general purposes of war, to the army establishment, which has the advantage of experience, and whose professional views are the honourable motives which assist in exciting to great actions, useful to the country and to the individuals; the changes which have been made by their powerful enemies have so much altered the militia, that its preservation is scarce an object, indeed its annihilation would become so, if some faint hopes of its revival did not linger in the breasts of its wellwishers, who are still inclined to prevent further aggressions on its principles and practice. The name of militia does not make the corps so called in each country similar to each other, or objects of reciprocal interchange; if it were possible that each could serve with equal

equal advantages in either country : but what is militia (in its true meaning) in one country, is an army in the other. Local attachments from similar customs and manners cannot be exchanged, the constitutional advantages, therefore, must be greatly diminished, and each corps so removed from their intercourse with their friends and families, will partake more of the feelings of a standing army than they would in their own country. It is no answer to this objection that it goes against the removal of the English militia from county to county ; it in some measure does, and if invasion of an island did not involve the whole island of necessity in one campaign and one state of warfare, the less they were removed from local affections and intercourse, and the less this species of force was taught to forget that they were defending their own homes and families, the better. The principle on which a militia is formed is not, nor can, nor ought, to be adapted to the extended service of an army. I have no difficulty in saying that we are all individually pledged in honour, as well as interest, to support, to the utmost of our power, the safety, interest, and constitutional freedom of the united empire in every part ; but that is not the question on the present discussion, which is whether we should accept the generous offers of the Irish militia, for certainly they are generous as far as relates to the offers ; but I do not think they are consistent with the constitution of either country, and it is on the ground of the system being detrimental to both countries that I object to their acceptance. A noble Earl on the other side has given us the topographical history of blunders, and deduced them from what he is willing in pleasantry to admit to be its parent soil ; I confess that I have not observed that blunders are exclusively the growth of any country, and I am sure that he will find more proofs of blunders and confusion in the acts of the present Ministers, than he could find in any class of men in Ireland ; but he commits himself an error, if not a blunder, in supposing that the meeting of Lord Lieutenants of counties, and Members of Parliament holding commissions in the militia of any county, was held in the spirit of blunder by those who objected to the deliberations of armed corps. I confess I am not able to find out the similarity of the meeting of the class described, and that of a regiment meeting to deliberate on their conduct as a regiment. Lord Lieutenants are no more military officers than Deputy Lieutenants of each county, and if they could not (without being within the mischief of armed delibe-

deliberations) assemble on the subject of the militia, their principal duty would be undone. It is not worth any further observation, than that Lieutenants of counties, if they can be called military men, are not an united corps, nor can act together; Members of Parliament, with commissions in the several counties, do not compose a military corps, nor can act together as such, and the meeting could have no question whether they should as a corps act or not; but whether they, knowing the principles of the militia; should, as Members of the Legislature, encourage or discourage a given system as advantageous or disadvantageous to the country, it has no possible operation on the discipline of any military body, which the deliberation of a military corps whether they should, as such, adopt or reject a proposal to act in corps, obviously has. I will now state my objection to this measure as respecting Ireland, as far as it now operates, before it produces the evil to Ireland of reciprocal interchange. As an Irish militia belongs locally to Ireland, the land owners of that country by a pecuniary charge affecting them exclusively of others, and not affecting the public purse, have paid the price of a home defence confined to Ireland; it is a breach of faith of the highest class to remove their home defence, levied at their expence, without their consent; it manifests a total want of sense, or a voluntary abdication of all justice, to consider the consent of the man hired for that defence to be equivalent to the consent of him who purchased the defence so hired; the man hired to serve only in Ireland certainly ought not to have his service extended without his consent, but surely his consent to withdraw his services from those who hired them, cannot justify this breach of contract to his employers, sanctioned by Parliament. The injustice does not stop here, for an equal number of Irish militia are to be raised to replace them, and then the persons who are defrauded by this bill must be at further expence to obtain the defence for which they before paid, with diminished trust in the faith of Parliament that they shall have what they pay for. This additional injustice must follow, if they are to pay the levy money in the same way that the present Irish militia is raised, but if the expence of the augmentation of militia in Ireland should come out of the public purse, (which will be a confession that they ought not to pay, because they have been defrauded) then we in England pay towards the Irish militia, and they do not pay towards ours; and the ignorance of our law makers throw them

them on farther injustice ; and it will add to the discordant principles and heterogeneous composition of militia, tending to confound its principles, and ultimately to establish a prerogative army by ballot, which is the great object of Government. One further objection weighs with me, that if I did not disapprove of the reciprocity of service of the militia of the two countries, as unconstitutional and disadvantageous to both countries, I should think that at this time, when a heavier storm seems to obscure the hemisphere of Ireland, it was not fit to remove from thence troops the most interested in its defence. And the additional militia to be raised in that country of 10,000 men, to replace the 10,000 to be brought here, is a proof (given by those who urge the bill) that Ireland cannot spare the troops now offering their service. For these reasons I shall give my vote against the admission of the offered militia, without meaning to depreciate the generosity of the offer.

Lord Auckland expressed his surprise, that the opposition to the bill should chiefly originate from those noble Peers who had repeatedly objected to his Majesty's Ministers, that they had not in readiness for the defence and safety of the country a force of a disposable nature sufficiently large. The opposition was therefore the more extraordinary, as, while they blamed Ministers for not having increased the disposable force, they denied to them, in the same breath, the power of that kind of force, by refusing their assent to a bill, professedly directed to the accomplishment of an object admitted on all hands to be so wise and salutary. No man could deny the wisdom and policy of immediately augmenting the disposable force of this country, more particularly when he looked at the wretched state of the Continent. Yet out of that wretched state some hopes were naturally excited. It was not in the nature of men or of things, that the war could last for any long time, and in that opinion he was justified by the answers given by the representatives of the different powers to the official communication made to them of the late lying correspondence and the fabricated plot. It was impossible that a Government which was founded in regicide, which was raised and exalted by blood and poison, and which was supported by midnight murders and assassinations, should long continue to be guided by a hand stained with the blood of innocent and royal victims. As to the benefits likely to result from the bill before their Lordships, there could be but one opinion. From their re-

sidence here the Irish militia would acquire improvements and habits of industry, which could not fail to be productive of real advantages, when they returned to their own country; and as to any diminution of the militia in Ireland, by a transfer of ten thousand to England, he thought that could form no ground of opposition to the bill, since it was well known such was the attachment of the people of that country to the Noblemen and Gentlemen, that the number would be replaced in a very short time by a new levy.

Lord Harrowby thought the bill objectionable, because it went to deprive Ireland of what she most wanted for her own protection, a strong efficient force; while the principle of reciprocity, with regard to the services of both militias, went for nothing in the present case as to the disposable force; for by substituting ten thousand men for the same number taken away, there was no increase whatever.

The *Marquis of Sligo* praised the conduct of the English militia in Ireland, and was convinced that the principle of reciprocal service would contribute in a very eminent degree to the improvement and consolidation of the union.

The *Duke of Montrose*, as an enemy to the deliberations of all armed bodies, professed himself inimical to the bill.

Lord Westmoreland entered into a variety of considerations and comparisons to shew the important benefits which the measure was likely to produce, in the security and welfare of the empire at large. When he looked at the present bill, which went to enable his Majesty to accept the voluntary offers of service made by part of the Irish militia, he confessed he could not separate it from the bill by which the same militia was to be augmented. In this connected point of view it could not be denied, that a disposable force was given to Government both in this country and in Ireland, and he should therefore vote for the bill.

Lord Darnley opposed the bill.

The *Earl of Egremont*, although he had not for a considerable time had occasion to address their Lordships, yet conceived the present measure so novel, and so objectionable on many accounts, that he thought it his duty to make a public avowal of his disapprobation of it.

Lord Grenville blamed Ministers for not submitting, in a fair and manly mode, to the consideration of Parliament, the principle of reciprocity between the militia establishments of both countries, if such was their intention, when they first

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countenanced the present measure. But they were not, perhaps, aware that the question had been in some measure already decided. By the articles of the union with Scotland, it was determined, after great deliberation, that the militia of England and of that country should be confined, in respect to their services, to the countries by which they were severally paid. His Lordship defended the meeting of the militia colonels at the Thatched-house, and challenged any noble Lord to point out why, or where, it was unconstitutional for a number of officers, all of them, without scarcely an exception, either Peers of Parliament, or Members of another House, to assemble and express their opinion on a subject which most materially concerned them. His Lordship expressed his most decided dissent to the bill.

Lord Hawkeſbury supported the measure, and found fault with the resolutions entered into by the officers who subscribed their names to them. He considered it as a very great error in them, to speak as leniently as he could of their conduct, to have assembled in an official and military capacity, and to have published the result of their deliberations at that meeting.

Lord Romney condemned the measure, and vindicated the conduct of the meeting at the Thatched-house, of which he had the honour to be one.

Lords Hawkeſbury and *Fitzwilliam* explained, the latter of whom being called to order by the Lord Chancellor, sat down.

The question being put on the second reading, the House divided:

Contents, - 64	} 77	Non-contents, - 43	} 48
Proxies - - 13		Proxies - - - 5	
Majority - 29			

Lord Hawkeſbury said, at that late hour he would not move for the second reading of the other bill before their Lordships, the Irish militia augmentation bill, but confine himself to moving, that the bill, now read a second time, should be committed for the next day.

Lord Grenville had infinitely greater objections to the second bill, than to the one just read, and would state those objections at some length the next day. He agreed with the noble Baron, that it was then too late to enter upon the discussion of it.

Adjourned at eleven o'clock.

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HOUSE

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THURSDAY, APRIL 19.

A ballot was to have taken place for a Committee to try and determine the merits of the Ilchester election; but owing to there being only 75 members present at four o'clock, the ballot could not proceed, and therefore the House adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

FRIDAY, APRIL 20.

IRISH MILITIA.

The order of the day, for the second reading of the Irish militia augmentation bill, having been read,

Lord Hobart stated, that it was not his intention to enter much upon the merits of the measure recommended and to be provided for by the bill for the augmentation of the Irish militia, which he intended to move should be now read a second time. The question had, in a great measure, been disposed of by the arguments that had been urged the preceding night, and he would only trouble the House with a few of those which he conceived to be most material. It had been much objected to the measure, when under discussion in another place, that it would not add to the disposable force of the country. From this he must beg leave to dissent; for, although certainly the 10,000 Irish militia that were to be raised, were not of that description of force that would be subject to be sent upon ordinary military service, yet they might be considered, to a certain extent, as a disposable force, inasmuch as they might enable his Majesty to detach an equal number of the regular force wherever it may be necessary. With respect to any opposition that the bill may meet with, although it was in all respects of the same precise tenor with a similar measure brought forward by the late Administration, he could not expect, on that account, that it would be found less objectionable, particularly by a noble Lord on an opposite bench. He could perceive a fixed disposition in that noble Lord to decry those measures of the present Government, which bore the greatest affinity to the measures of that Government in which he filled a distinguished place. Although that noble Lord had formerly sanctioned similar measures, and supported them with

with all his acknowledged ability, yet the very circumstance of their being introduced by the present Ministers, was sufficient to induce him to condemn them as absurd, puerile, and inefficient. It would be for the noble Lord to establish his consistency, but he professed he could not discover upon what principle of that kind the noble Lord could now reprobate those measures he but a very few years ago approved. He wished noble Lords to understand that measures are now pursuing to augment the disposable force to the amount of 25,000 more than at present; consequently it would be seen that Government are not inattentive to their duty. The noble Lord adverted to the observations which had been made the preceding evening, respecting the correspondence carried on by a noble Lord (Redesdale) in Ireland, and observed that he never before that evening had conceived that private correspondence ought to be made the subject of public avowal or disavowal on the part of Government. He then moved the second reading of the bill.

Earl Spencer professed that his objection to this measure did not originate in any opinion which he might have formed on the letters alluded to by the noble Secretary of State. With respect to the principle of the measure, he must condemn it altogether. It is impolitic at the present moment to take so large a portion of the force as 10,000 from the defence of Ireland. He must also contend, that it is impolitic and unwise to make such an addition for limited service only. We ought to add to our disposable force, and therefore, instead of increasing the militia of Ireland, at the rate of four guineas per man bounty, he would advise Ministers to give even the bounty of ten guineas for an equal number for general service. The noble Earl was happy to congratulate the House upon what they had just heard from the noble Secretary of State, namely, that it is in contemplation to augment the disposable force; but he could not help observing, that the whole of the measures of the present Administration were calculated to thwart and cross each other. He concluded with giving his decided negative to the motion for the second reading.

Lord Grenville would not enter into any length of discussion on that day, as many noble Lords beside himself were much fatigued from the length which the debate of the preceding evening had taken; he wished it, however, to be understood, that it was not because his opinions were changed. He should take another opportunity of discussing the measure,

sure, and would not suffer any observations which might be made by noble Lords opposite, respecting the acts which had passed during the time in which he formed a part of the Administration, to prevent him from giving his decided opposition to a measure, which he considered as one of the most weak, pitiable, and puerile measures which have disgraced the present Ministry. Whatever might have been the construction of the acts to which the allusion had been made, the House would recollect the difference of situation in which the country is placed at the present period, and at the time to which the noble Lord had alluded. If Ministers could not discriminate, the House and the country would; and nothing should deter him from delivering his sentiments openly and fairly as an honest Member of Parliament. He trusted the proper notice would be given of the next stages of the bill, as many noble Lords not present wished to discuss it.

The *Lord Chancellor* acknowledged, that he was never more surprised, than at the declaration of the noble Baron that he would not debate the principle of the bill at present. When that noble Lord on the preceding evening, with all the gravity that belonged to him, declared, on its being proposed to read the bill a second time, that he had more objections to make to it than to the bill which they had then debated, he really thought that the House had a right to expect that he would come down prepared to state those objections. His Majesty's Ministers were fully prepared to enter upon the discussion: they felt within them all the strength and spirit of *giants refreshed*; and they challenged the noble Lord to the contest. He, for one, was prepared to defend the present measure, which, in common with all the other measures of the present Ministers, were branded by his noble Friend (he hoped he would allow him to call him so now, he hoped he should call him so when all the nonsense of politics was over) with the epithets of puerile, inconsiderate, and he knew not what. He saw no reason why the discussion should be delayed, unless the noble Lord did not feel himself so confident at that moment as he appeared to be the preceding night.

Lord Grenville did not wish to disconcert the good humour of the noble and learned Lord. If, as he had declared, the Ministers felt like "*giants refreshed*," he could assure the noble Lord, that those on the same side of the House with him, did not feel, from any thing which had lately occurred in that House, that they had any reason to suppose that they had

had been discomfited. But really the cause why he wished to postpone the discussion was, that many noble Lords, who found it impossible to attend that evening, were anxious to be present when the principle should be debated, and it was his wish to accommodate them. As that might as well be done on the consideration of the report, or on the third reading, he saw no absolute necessity for pressing it in the present stage of the bill.

Lord Hawkesbury delivered a few words in reply, and proposed that the bill should be committed for Monday; and if no amendment took place, it might be reported on the same evening, and the debate take place on the next day, on the third reading.

The bill was then read a second time, and committed for Monday.

The House next resolved itself into a Committee on the Irish militia transfer bill, in which

The Bishop of St. Asaph drew the attention of noble Lords to an inconvenience to which, in his opinion, the officers and privates of the Irish militia, who should come over under the authority of this act, would be subject. The laws of Ireland, and particularly the 31st of the King, allowed persons professing the catholic religion to become members of the army and militia in that country. But that was not the case here. By the 1st of George I. all persons entering into the army were obliged to take the test, the oaths of supremacy and abjuration, and in case they should not, would be subject to various civil incapacities, besides a fine of 500*l*. He wished the militia of Ireland, who in consequence of the present bill should come over here, to be protected against the operation of that penal law.

This brought on a conversation, in which the Lord Chancellor, Lords Hawkesbury, Grenville, Carnarvon, and Ellenborough, took part. The latter noble and learned Lord was of opinion, that the Irish militia coming here, would come over with all the privileges and immunities that they were entitled to under the militia laws of their own country. He thought it would be very hard indeed, if when they came over here from principles of the purest patriotism and loyalty, they should be covered with penalties and disabilities. It was his opinion that they would not be subject to the operation of the mutiny law of this country; however, if there was no other objection to it, he thought it would not be improper to introduce a special provision to protect them
against

against the possible application of the provisions of the English mutiny act.

The *Lord Chancellor* did not see the absolute necessity of any such proviso; however, whether or not, he thought it would be right to defer the consideration of it to some other stage of the bill. It might be as well done on receiving the report, or on the third reading of the bill.

The remaining provisions of the bill were then read, and the further discussion of the proviso, proposed by Lord Ellenborough, reserved till Monday, to which day the House adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

FRIDAY, APRIL 20.

The House proceeded to ballot for a Committee to try the merits of the petitions complaining of an undue election and return for the borough of Ilchester.

Mr. Rose stated, as a ground for a motion he intended to make, that the accounts already on the table relative to the state of the public revenue, were neither satisfactory, nor sufficient to enable gentlemen to form any just opinion on this most important subject. The hon. Gentleman therefore moved, that there be laid before the House an account of the produce of all the permanent taxes in the years ending the 5th January 1803, and the 5th January 1804, distinguishing those which had been imposed previous to the year 1793, and those laid on since; also distinguishing the amount of the duties which had been postponed previous to the 5th of January 1803, and were received in the course of 1803; also the amount of the duties postponed previous to the 5th of January 1804, which had been received in the course of the present year; likewise shewing the diminution of the revenue in payment of corn bounties.

Mr. Vansittart assenting to the motion, the accounts were ordered.

On the motion of *Mr. Secretary Yorke*, the Lords' amendments to the volunteer bill were ordered to be taken into consideration on Monday next.

The Committee on the militia officers bill was put off to Monday.

GOVERNMENT DISPATCHES TO INDIA.

Mr. Kinnaird rose to make a motion for papers, to which, from

from what had taken place the preceding day in another branch of the Legislature, he did not suppose there would be any objection. The ground on which he rested his motion was the notoriety of certain facts, and the right the House had to expect official information on a subject of such importance. The object of his motion was to have laid before the House copies of the dispatches which had been sent by his Majesty's Government to the different presidencies in India, and the commanding officers there, as well as to the governor of the island of St. Helena, on his Majesty's messages of March and May last. The message of the 8th of March had been known at Calcutta so early as the 24th of June, though no official account had reached it till the 5th of July. On the 5th of June a French frigate arrived with, and landed troops at Pondicherry; on the 13th, Linois arrived there, but on the 14th a corvette reached him with dispatches, in consequence of which he cut his cables in the night and escaped. The hon. Member then adverted to the different periods at which the different presidencies had been made acquainted with the rupture, and contended, that if the facts he stated could not be controverted, they were a proof of gross and criminal neglect on the part of his Majesty's Ministers. As to St. Helena, no dispatches whatever had been sent by Government to that island, and the first intimation of the rupture was received there in the month of October, from an English frigate which carried a prize thither. He hoped his Majesty's Ministers could prove that every necessary precaution had been taken to secure our possessions in that quarter, and that if any misfortune were to be the consequence of the escape of Linois, it would not be attributable to their neglect. The hon. Gentleman then moved, that an humble address be presented to his Majesty, requesting, that he would be graciously pleased to give directions, that there be laid before the House copies of all the dispatches sent to the different presidencies in India, and the officers commanding by land and sea there, communicating his Majesty's message of the 8th of March. Also, of the dispatches to the same, communicating the rupture with France. Also; an account of the dates of the receipts of said dispatches respectively. Also, copies of the dispatches to the Governor of the Island of St. Helena, communicating the message of the 8th of March, and the rupture, with an account of the dates of their receipt.

Lord Castlereagh had no objection to the production of the papers; if he could feel any, it was only that they did not go far enough. As to the circumstance alluded to by the hon.

Member, which had taken place in another House, he could assure him that there would have been no objection in that quarter, if the motion had been brought forward after regular notice. The noble Lord then stated that distinct and positive dispatches had been sent out by his Majesty's Ministers, and by the Secret Committee at the India House, to the different presidencies, and to the officers commanding in India, both on his Majesty's message in March and in May.

The motions were then agreed to.

ARMY OF RESERVE SUSPENSION BILL.

Mr. Secretary Yorke having moved that the order of the day, for a Committee of the whole House on the army of reserve act suspension bill, be read, stated, that when he had proposed the Committee on the bill for that day, he had hopes that all the clauses which he meant to propose in the Committee, would have been prepared before that time. This, however, had been found impracticable, and he therefore trusted the House would consent to have the order postponed to Wednesday next.

On the question that the order be postponed,

Mr. Pitt felt himself involved in some difficulty by the motion of his right hon. Friend. He had given notice, or rather an hon. Friend had given notice for him, of his intention to state his opinions at large on the subject, in the present stage of the measure. His intention was to oppose the motion for the Speaker's leaving the chair, for the purpose of stopping the further progress of the bill, in order that instead of a bill for suspending the army of reserve act, another measure might be introduced more likely to be effectual for the public service. Of this measure he had given notice previous to the recess, and had been induced to postpone it in compliance with the wishes of his Majesty's Ministers. Whether the right hon. Gentleman was prepared or not with the clauses which he meant to propose in the Committee, was indifferent with respect to a discussion, in which he trusted to convince the House that the bill ought not to be committed at all. The reason he assigned for putting off the order for going into the Committee, was undoubtedly good against the Committee, but could not apply to a discussion which Gentlemen had been led to expect on that day, and the object of which was, to prevent the further progress of the bill, if he could convince the House that it ought not to be proceeded with at all. It was his intention, if the motion were to have been persisted in for going into the Committee, to have opposed the Speaker's leaving the chair, and after explaining the nature

nature of the measure which he thought most likely to meet the exigency of the times, to propose the postponement of the question for a week or a fortnight, in order to afford Gentlemen time to turn the subject in their minds, and to form a sound and deliberate judgment on it. The House would recollect, that he was not then pressing the question precipitately forward, but anxious to bring under its serious consideration an important discussion after repeated notices. He was disposed, therefore, to propose an amendment, by substituting Wednesday evening or fortnight for Wednesday; but should forbear moving it, till he should hear what further reasons the right hon. Gentleman had to urge in support of his motion.

Mr. Secretary Yorke stated, that when he had proposed on Wednesday last to defer the Committee on the bill, he was induced to fix it for the first open day. He had intended to have proposed Monday, another important question having then stood for this day, and when the arrangement relative to that question took place, he felt no objection to fix the Committee for this day, hoping that the new clauses would be then prepared. It was necessary to frame those clauses with great nicety and precision, and therefore the more time was required. It was important that the discussion of this measure should not be postponed further than was absolutely unavoidable, and therefore he could not consent to postpone the consideration of it longer than Wednesday. It would, nevertheless, be open to the right hon. Gentleman to urge his reasons to the House for a further delay on that or any other day, and to explain the plan which appeared to his mind more likely to be effectual to the public service, in order, if it should appear to the House preferable to the one now before it, to get rid of that altogether.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not press his amendment; his object was to obtain a further delay than was proposed, and might very consistently be pressed if the motion of his right hon. Friend was for the House to go into the Committee that day. The right hon. Gentleman could not be fettered nor embarrassed by agreeing to the present motion; because if he should think delay necessary, he might propose it on Wednesday, on the question for the Speaker's leaving the chair. The right hon. Gentleman had certainly, in compliance with what he had stated to be the wishes of his Majesty's Ministers, consented to defer his proposition until after the measure in their contemplation should undergo a discussion. No discussion had yet taken place on that subject, and as he understood the

right hon. Gentleman to have consented to postpone his proposition until that should take place, he did not think he would press it in this instance. But he thought an acquiescence in the motion of his right hon. Friend due to a circumstance to which he could not regularly advert, but the fact was, that many Gentlemen who had intended to take a part in the discussion, were absent in consequence of an intimation from his right hon. Friend, that it was his intention to apply for this delay. This was really the fact, and it was certainly not attributable to any unfair motives. If, however, he could ascertain the general sense of the House to be for proceeding with the bill, he should not object to it, though it would be recollected that the words of his right hon. Friend "he hoped to have the clauses ready by this day" implied a doubt whether he could be prepared to proceed with the bill.

Mr. Fox thought the very reverse was the case; and that in place of feeling doubts as to this day, the right hon. Secretary had been on a former day prepared to proceed with the discussion, which he had put off expressly in consideration of the application on the part of the right hon. Gentleman (*Mr. Pitt*), unless, perhaps, being determined to defer the consideration of it, he thought he might as well make a compliment of the delay. (*A laugh.*) But if he was less ready on this than on a former day to proceed, was there not reason to suppose that on Wednesday he should be less prepared to proceed than at present? In this case, he was of opinion that there was no sufficient reason for the House to defer the discussion. But the question was in much abler hands than his, and he should not interfere further.

Mr. Secretary Yorke replied that when the day was fixed for the Committee, he had expressly declared that he could not be prepared with the clauses on Thursday, but hoped to have them ready on this day; and as the hon. Member was not present on the occasion, he appealed to the hon. Member (*Mr. Long*) who had made the application.

Mr. Long assented.

Mr. Pitt observed, that one of the reasons which induced him to press the discussion, was a desire to consult the convenience of the House. Another was, his wish to bring forward the discussion on this subject previous to any of the other discussions of which notice had been given. It was with reluctance, therefore, he consented to his amendment; but as he had the strongest desire to accommodate those whose duty it was to bring forward and arrange the public measures, he should not press it in this instance. He must
say,

say, however, that he did not yield to arguments. He certainly could not perceive any appearance of a thin attendance, and if all public measures were to be marked in the progress by the attendance of such numbers, there would be no reason to complain of the Legislature. He did not think it regular, nor altogether consistent with the respect due to the opinion of the House, to anticipate its decision; but when the Gentlemen on the bench below him declared, that they were not ready to meet the discussion as they wished, it was not his desire to urge them to it. But as they had precipitately produced the absence of certain Gentlemen who had meant to attend, he trusted, that from a regard to the convenience of those Gentlemen who were then present, no further application would be made for delay, for he looked to this discussion as a most important object, in laying the foundation for an efficient regular army, both now and hereafter.

The Committee was then postponed to Wednesday.

Lord Porchester gave notice of a motion for copies of any, and what orders had been sent out to officers commanding in India to detain French vessels, &c. for Friday next.

Mr. Fox gave notice of a motion for an account of the transports that had been taken up for bringing over the Hanoverian troops, for the same day.

The House went into a Committee on the report of the Committee for carrying into effect the act for making an inland navigation between Inverness and Fort William, in Scotland. The Committee came to a resolution, that a bill should be brought in for making a further provision for making and maintaining the said navigation. The House being resumed, the report was brought up, the resolution agreed to, and a bill ordered accordingly.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer gave notice, that in the Committee of Supply on Monday, he should move a grant for making a provision for that purpose.

EXCHEQUER BILLS.

Mr. Alexander brought up the report of the Committee of Ways and Means.

The question on the issue of Exchequer bills being moved by the Chancellor of the Exchequer,

Mr. *Johnstone* objected to the further issue of these bills. He considered 24,800,000*l.* the sum in this form now in the money market, and that it was much too large a sum to answer

answer the purposes of national expedience. At the time the loan will be proposed, the quantity in the market will probably be 25,000,000*l.* and the effect of this enormous quantity, if continued, must necessarily be greatly to reduce their value. It should be recollected, said the hon. Member, that last year, when the financial negotiations were commenced, we had only 20 millions in Exchequer bills, and we should pause before we departed from the established maxims of state policy which had been hitherto regarded with so much advantage. It was the more wise at this time to economize the pecuniary resources, as we might be led into a prodigious expenditure. We may be constrained to call out the volunteer force, and to support, in consequence, the expence of this immense military body. No less a sum than 16 millions is to be raised between the present time and the 5th of April next. Another motive for the preference of a large loan to a small one, to excuse the issue of Exchequer bills, is, that the loyalty loan is to be provided for. If the amount of Exchequer bills were to be so extravagantly increased, we could not rely upon this resource for that and similar emergencies; and next year, if the Minister proceeded as he had done, we should have to fund, for Exchequer bills in addition to the periodical loan the necessities of the state will require. Exchequer bills are now, and have been for the last month, at a discount. He wished, that instead of eight millions in this way, only three millions should be issued. It would, perhaps, be said that the issue of Exchequer bills is not now greater than at some former periods. Looking, however, at the four last budgets, the quantity was never so burthen some as at present in that interval. It was true, that under the former Administration they had been extended to 36 millions; but the impolicy was soon discovered, and as soon as possible the diminution was effected. On every view of the case he could not discern any reason why the loan might not in the present instance be increased, and the bills diminished five millions. If there was a plausible objection, it was, that the public had been led to expect the approaching loan should not exceed 16 millions; but he was confident the right hon. Gentleman would not barter away the substantial interests of the country to avoid disappointing this expectation. He was sure the Chancellor of the Exchequer had the benefit of the state nearest his heart, and would be equally disposed to sacrifice private feeling or popular applause to promote it.

Mr.

Mr. Vanstuart agreed in the general principle, that an excessive issue of Exchequer bills would be injurious to the country, but denied that that was the case in the present instance. There were no bills outstanding of an earlier date than April 1803, and from the quantity discharged, the market required a new issue. Those now outstanding would be materially diminished this year, and as the whole expenditure of the year was to be provided for by the ways and means of the year, without including Exchequer bills, a large amount of them would be paid off in the course of the year, and the quantity in the market, at any period, would never exceed the quantity at any former corresponding period.

Mr. Johnstone stated, that, from an attentive investigation of the price current, he had found that Exchequer bills had been at a discount of one per cent. from 1st January to the present time.

Mr. Dent also asserted that they were at a discount.

Mr. Vanstuart and the Chancellor of the Exchequer explained, that the bills that had been at a discount were only those that bore an interest of three-pence a day; none of those issued by the present Government bearing an interest of 3½d. a day, were at a discount.

The resolutions were agreed to, as well as those respecting the pay and clothing of the militia, and the allowance to militia officers. Bills were ordered accordingly.

CATHOLICS IN THE IRISH MILITIA.

Mr. Dillon said, he was not aware when he gave his vote in favour of the Irish militia offers bill, that the Roman Catholics in the Irish militia, as soon as they came over here, would be subject to the penalties of the statute of Geo. I. He wished to know, whether the right hon. Gentleman opposite had provided any remedy for such Roman Catholic militiamen, against those penalties. If not, he should, on an early day, submit a motion to the House on the subject.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* replied, that the hon. Gentleman might have answered his own question. He could not have provided any remedy, but by a legislative measure, of which the hon. Gentleman would have been aware, if it had been brought forward. He had only to observe, that there was nothing applicable to the Irish militia, which was not equally applicable to the Irish Catholics in the

the regiments of the line, nor had they any thing more to apprehend.

Mr. Kinnaird moved, that there be laid before the House an account of the dates of all dispatches sent out by the Secret Committee of the East-India Company, to the different presidencies in India, from the 8th March, the day of his Majesty's message, till the rupture with France. Ordered.

Mr. Kinnaird gave notice, that on Monday he should move an humble address to his Majesty, praying that his Majesty would be graciously pleased to order to be laid before the House, a list of all officers on the half-pay.

Adjourned till Monday.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

MONDAY, APRIL 23.

Counsel was heard in the cause *Hunter v. Lord Kinnoul*, which was ordered to be proceeded in on Thursday.

The Irish linen manufactory bill, and several private bills, were brought up from the Commons.

The Irish militia augmentation bill went through a Committee, and was ordered to be read a third time the next day.

The other bills on the table were forwarded in their several stages.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, APRIL 23.

Lord Marsham, Chairman of the Committee on the Middlesex election, reported, that Benjamin Weal, ordered to be taken into custody for disobedience to a summons of the said Committee, had appeared before the Committee and given his evidence. The said Weal was, on petition, ordered to be brought up the next day to be discharged.

Lord Henry Petty reported from the Committee on the Ilchester election, that Mr. John Manners was duly elected, and that the petition of Mr. Ogle was frivolous and vexatious.

Mr. Dillon gave notice of his intention to move, on Monday next, for leave to bring in a bill to exempt Catholics serving

serving in the Irish militia, from the pains and penalties of the statute of George the First.

Mr. Charles Dundas presented a petition for leave to bring in a bill for defraying the expences of prosecutions out of the county rates in England and Wales. The petition was referred to a Committee.

Mr. Corry stated, that a loan of a million and a quarter had been contracted for in Ireland, and gave notice that he should submit a motion with respect to it in the Committee of Supply on Wednesday.

Mr. Corry brought in a bill for continuing certain acts relating to the duties in Ireland. Read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time the next day.

On the motion of Mr. Secretary Yorke, the amendments of the Lords in the volunteer bill were, according to the precedent on the militia bill in 1757, referred to a select Committee to report thereon to the House as it should appear to them to be right.

Mr. Alexander brought in bills for defraying the charges of the pay, clothing, and allowances of the British and Irish militia, and raising the sums of 8,000,000*l.* and 1,500,000*l.* on Exchequer bills; which were all read a first time; and ordered to be read a second time the next day.

On the motion of Mr. Secretary Yorke, the House went into a Committee on the militia officers bill. The report was ordered to be received the next day.

On the motion of Mr. Sheridan, the consideration of the petition, relating to the right of voting in the borough of Liskeard, was deferred from the next day till Thursday.

Mr. Kinnaid moved, that an humble address be presented to his Majesty, praying that his Majesty may give directions, that there be laid before the House a list of half-pay officers, distinguishing the ranks, and stating those that were on the staff, those that were unemployed, and those that were unfit for service. The object of the motion was to ground on it a motion for allowing full pay to such officers of the half pay as were engaged in the volunteer service.

The Secretary at War agreed to the address, but wished to be understood not to pledge himself to the motion with which the hon. Gentleman meant to follow up the list when produced.

DEFENCE OF THE NATION.

Mr. Fox—I am afraid, Sir, that I shall find it necessary
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to make some preliminary observations before I proceed to state my motion to the House on the military defence of the country. Those preliminary observations are rendered necessary by the construction which has been put by many persons on the zeal which has been manifested by the people in support of the war. That great zeal has undoubtedly been manifested by all descriptions of persons, is a truth which I have much pleasure to observe; but the attempt to construe this zeal into an approbation of the principle of the war itself, or of the conduct of his Majesty's Ministers in involving the country in that war, is what I will not permit to pass unobserved, for it is not a fair construction, nor can it be supported by any fair reasoning or sound deduction. The zeal which has been displayed by the people of England is most honourable to their feelings; it does not spring from any approbation of the war, much less from any approbation of the measures of Government, but that motive which will ever be inseparable from the breast of Englishmen—a determined resolution to resist the menaces of a foreign enemy. Their zeal has been displayed in the maintenance of all that is dear to them, in the defence of their country against the threats of invasion, and in the support of its glory, and may in truth be termed a zeal shewn in self-defence. It is not a proof that they either consider the war as originally necessary, or that they approve of the spirit and temper of those negotiations by which it was brought on. I, in common with every one of my fellow subjects, partake of the zeal which I have described, and I know that that species of zeal is not singular to myself. However unwisely, however unnecessarily we plunged in the war, that war was immediately followed by the threat of invasion, and the country was brought into the most imminent danger, according to the belief of all ranks of people, by the formidable preparations of the enemy. In that case is it possible for any man to interpret the zeal which burst forth into any other motive than that of self-defence? The country at large stood forward to protect themselves and families against the danger, whatever might be the cause from which it sprung. If this sort of zeal is to be argued upon as a proof of the popularity of the war, or if Ministers are allowed to consider it as a proof of the approbation of their measures, then we may fairly say that it is only necessary for Government to plunge the nation in the greatest possible danger, in order to obtain the universal support of the people. The character

character of the people of England is perfectly understood; they will always be found ready in the moment of danger, and the greater and more deplorable the state of calamity in which the kingdom may be involved, the greater and more zealous will be their exertions for its deliverance. It is impossible therefore that Ministers can flatter themselves with the idea that the manly and virtuous stand which the people have made in a case of life or death, was in any shape connected with the causes of the war, the negotiations with which it was accompanied, or the time at which it was brought on. In truth, no symptom of approbation has been shewn in any part of the country, nor was it even received in Parliament with any decided marks of applause; for though in the first address Ministers did obtain the sanction of the House, yet it was in very general terms, and these, in a subsequent debate, were qualified, by many considerable persons, with objections to the conduct of the negotiations, so as to shew that it was the general opinion that the war might have been avoided. I therefore contend, that from the commencement of the war to the present moment, whatever display of spirit, exertion, and zeal has been made by the country, has nothing to do with the cause of the war, and much less with the conduct of Ministers. Indeed it might be shewn that the exertions that have been made by the people arose out of the inaction and incapacity of Ministers themselves. The want of any strong well concerted plan on the part of Ministers forced the people at large to come forward and defend themselves, and I am sure I speak the language of many Gentlemen who hear me, when I say that this was the prevalent feeling in the country. Those who know my character will not think it necessary for me to assert that I am as zealous as any man in defence of the country from all foreign attack, and as ready, in the moment of danger, to forget the cause that led to it; but I must deprecate all misconstruction of my conduct in so acting. Though I am ready to make any sacrifice for the independence of the empire, I must not therefore be considered as an abettor of the rashness, ambition, or disingenuous counsels that led us into the danger. Perhaps, Sir, there may be persons who think, that the danger of invasion was not so imminent as the cry would have made us believe, and certainly the apprehension of an immediate attack was not universally felt. This, however, does not change, in any respect, the nature of the exertion which was made by the country. It was not a panic of in-

vasion that seized the people, not the dread of being overrun by the enemy, for in the most alarming moment, they had just confidence in themselves, but an universal feeling that it was wise and prudent to be prepared, and a pretty general conviction, that in the incapacity of Ministers they must look to themselves. But, independent of all real ground for alarm, it was impossible for the country to see the parade that was made by Ministers, and the noise that was excited of some dreadful and gigantic mischief with which we were threatened, without being in some sort terrified into a belief of the reality. It certainly would have justified any Gentleman, like Sir Christopher Hatton, to have addressed the Minister in the very words that he uses:—

“ Ah, my noble friend, when I behold
 “ Yon tented plains in martial symmetry
 “ Array'd.
 “ I cannot but surmise (forgive, my friend,
 “ If the conjecture's rash)—I cannot but
 “ Surmise—the state some danger apprehends !”

I have no objection to this language, and I subscribe to all reports which have been made on the threats of invasion, but with two provisos:—1, that we shall be prepared to meet it, if real; and 2, that such language shall not be used to excite needless terror. If there are serious apprehensions that the enemy has meditated the plan of an invasion, and made or is making formidable preparations for that purpose, and that he has weighed in his mind all the probabilities of such an enterprise, it becomes indispensable for this country to devise the means of effectual defence. We must not content ourselves with temporary stratagems, nor repose in any temporary defence. We must not reckon on his coming in the year 3, or 4, or 5, because if he has meditated the scheme, he will not limit himself to the time. The plan once considered and determined on, the attempt may be made hereafter, and therefore we have no alternative. To temporary danger we should do right to oppose temporary means; but for permanent designs of annoyance we must provide permanent remedies.—It is my object, Sir, to draw the attention of the House to this view of the subject. It certainly does appear, that the French consider by their preparations the enterprise of an invasion of this country a practicable attempt. It cannot be concealed that they have gone to a great extent of preparation, and a considerable part of this may be regarded, as meant for the purpose of permanent annoyance. The nation is called

called upon, therefore, to devise the means of permanent safety. My motion, however, will not extend to the general system of defence, which it is essential to provide, but to that of the army only. In the many difficulties that assail us at this moment, and which it would be tedious and wearisome to particularise, I wish to keep the view of the House to a system of permanent defence by land. I do not wish to incumber the question by inquiring this day into the difficulties that press upon us respecting the finances of the country—nor the difficulty arising from the want of currency in Ireland—nor the circumstance of the existence to this day of martial law in that country. I wish to avoid all other topics of inquiry this day, except that of the establishment of such a plan of military defence as shall be equal to the hostile designs of the enemy, however formidable and however protracted they may be. I wish to bring the discussion into as narrow a compass as possible, and therefore, to confine myself to the mere question of internal defence. I do not even mean to mix with it any observations on the naval defence of the country; nor shall I attempt to revive the discussions that have taken place on the volunteer question. That subject has been so frequently before the House, that I can only say what I have before so often expressed, that the volunteer body merit the most grateful thanks of their country for the exertions they have made, and that on the motion with which I shall conclude, for a Committee to consider of the best means of a permanent military defence, the alacrity, spirit, and perseverance of the volunteers will be a good ground for trusting to the system which I mean to suggest. In moving for a Committee generally to consider, I leave it to other Gentlemen to throw out what particular objects it ought to embrace. It will strike the House, at the outset, that such a Committee will have two distinct objects—1. The solid increase of the regular military force, and to remove the impediments that have stood in the way of its late recruitment; 2. The formation of an irregular but auxiliary force of a permanent kind. As to the first, it is impossible for the House at this time to know the real state of it. They have no documents before them upon which they can ascertain the state of the regular army. Gentlemen who have good means of information differ so essentially from Ministers in the estimate which they make of the amount of the regular army, that it is impossible to judge between them. According to the assertions which have been made in this House, the re-

turns

turns of the infantry are said to be double what officers of good information believed them to be. Now why is there all this mystery and concealment on the subject? Surely it cannot be alleged that the enemy will gain any thing by knowing the amount. The number of battalions are known to every one. The expence of the establishment is nearly ascertained, and it is therefore in the power of any military man, accustomed to those details, to calculate the force of rank and file. It is idle, therefore, to attempt to make a secret to Parliament only of that which is no secret, and which can be no secret to others. But Ministers think it quite sufficient to say, that the regular force is fully equal to what it was at the end of the last war. I can only say for myself, that it is difficult to believe this assertion, and alluding particularly to Ireland, in which they assert the regular force to be equal, I fairly say, I do not believe it, if you take into the account of regulars, the militia and British fencible regiments then in Ireland. At the end of the last war, the amount of the military force in Ireland, of these descriptions, was between 50 and 60,000 men. Is it possible to believe that there is at this time an equal number? With respect to accessory force, such as artillery, guns, horses, and drivers, it is considerably higher than at the end of the last war, if we are to trust to Ministers' speeches; but as I am incredulous on the subject, I wish it to be made apparent by documents laid before the Committee. Before I go on, however, I must advert to an observation that may be made, that I of all men ought not to complain if the ranks should be thin, because I was for keeping down the peace establishment. It is most true that I was for keeping down the peace establishment; and I was so upon the grounds taken by Ministers themselves. They did not demand a greater establishment than they obtained—they gave the House the most solemn assurances of continuance of peace, and therefore, the ground was specifically different from what it is now, and I am justified in saying what I have always maintained, that the economy of a low establishment in time of profound peace is the sure and best means of enabling us to provide an adequate force in time of war. But in time of peace that old constitutional force, the militia, in favour of which so many of my most respectable friends are such warm admirers, was recommended as excellent in its principle: and I know, that these persons think we ought ever to have in view that force as our chief dependence for internal defence. No man, however, will say, that a militia can be altogether

together equal to a regular army, since an army that has not seen actual service, cannot be equal to an army that has seen it. For the great purpose, therefore, of a permanent defence against the meditated plan of attack, the increase of the regular force, or the provision of an elementary force, which would always come in aid of it, is the desideratum to be obtained; and what I complain of is, that our efforts have not been wisely devoted to that purpose; every regulation has been calculated to counteract the recruiting of the regular army—and with these impediments in the way of the regulars, it is impossible that they should get them. It is natural to think that on the breaking out of a war, there must be always some contraction of the manufactures of a nation; some diminution of the commerce, some part of its population thrown out of employment, and that, consequently, men are to be had by the regular army without much difficulty. So it would be perhaps upon a good system; but when I am told that this has happened, and that men are to be got by the regulars at ten guineas, when the army of reserve are giving 50, I must say that I do not believe it. Human nature is the same at all times; and I cannot believe that the people of this country are so little capable of calculation, or so foolish, as to accept of the smaller sum when the greater is to be had. It is in vain to resist plain and simple truths. Men are not to be bubbled with theories which contradict human reason. You must put an end to every foolish impediment that stands in the way of recruiting the regular force, if you expect it to succeed. You cannot hope to get men by the ordinary bounty which the regulars offer, while a competition is maintained so excessive; and it is not that inequality only which you have to remove, but a much more serious obstacle, and upon the folly of which I never heard one single military man to differ, I mean the monstrous error of enlisting men for life. Is it not a most singular thing, that this should be the only country in Europe in which this practice prevails? In all the great military establishments on the Continent no such thing is attempted. In countries the most despotic, where governments of tyranny demand most the service of unconditional submission, and where it may be supposed the Government would give the greatest facility to perpetuating the service, no such thing has been attempted. But in the freest country in Europe, in that country which boasts of the vigilance and care which it exercises by law over the persons and properties of the people, is it not monstrous that this should be the

the only place where men are so enlisted? In England the law imposes restraints upon persons with respect to the alienation of their property. A man in many cases cannot dispose of his property; and no person under the age of 21 can alienate any part of his estate. Nay, most unwisely in my mind, both sexes are restrained from disposing of their persons in marriage long after they have attained an age when nature dictates to them the propriety of doing so. But though they cannot give away their properties, nor even yield to the honest and generous affections of the heart in disposing of their persons in marriage without the consent of their parents, they may, by law in this free land, sell themselves at any age into military bondage for their natural lives! It is a monstrous solecism; it is a stain upon our military code; and, like every other gross and absurd practice, it serves to impede instead of promoting the service. For what is it but this contract for life that renders this service so terrific to every parent and to every relative? Every Gentleman must have had frequent opportunities of seeing the effect which it has upon the hearts of fathers and mothers, even in the very lowest classes of society. They must have seen with what agony they have heard of their son's enlisting for life; and with what eagerness they hoard up from their scanty earnings, a sum to buy him off; with what earnest supplications they pray for his relief. And why is all this? but that by the nature of this engagement, made by a youth in a giddy moment, they consider him as cut off from their family for ever; cut off from the enjoyment of all the quiet blessings they intended for him, or from the exertions by which their own toils were to be eased, and their old age protected; because they consider his enlisting for life as tantamount to civil annihilation; but would it be so if the contract were limited to a certain, and that a short period? On the contrary, would it not dispose many a parent, not merely in the lowest classes of society, but even farmers and tradesmen, to consent to a son's entering into the service, or of viewing his entrance with complacency, if thinking him perhaps a little too unsteady for their occupations, they knew that his military career would be over in a certain number of years, and that he might then return to them with a mind improved by the knowledge of the world; and with habits useful to his future life? If the absurd practice were done away, is it to be apprehended that any considerable number of good men would be lost at the expiration of their terms; and is there any just reason to dread that they should

should disband in numbers at one time? Against both evils easy provisions might be made. Good soldiers would not be likely to quit the service. Men are fond of that in which they excel; a new bounty, hope of promotion, or perhaps in some cases an increase of pay, would be an irresistible temptation; and as to a general disbanding, that might be easily avoided, and would of course be so if the nature of enlisting was made uniform. New modes must undoubtedly be tried—for hitherto no plan has succeeded. The breach of the peace was announced so long ago as the beginning of March, and hostilities began in May last. We are now within three weeks of a twelvemonth at actual war, and what success have we made in creating a regular army? It is said, that one great evil is removed by putting an end to the abuse of rank. Officers cannot now get more than one step. This is something, but, with all possible respect for the vigilance with which office is administered at this time, I do not think it possible altogether to check the abuse of rank. There will be evasion of the rules if the least loophole is permitted in that which is so pernicious to the service. Nothing effectual can be done in the way of recruiting the regular army without radical reforms. There must be no competition for men, no buying them by extravagant bounties, and no enlisting for life. The army of reserve must be totally suspended, and the militia be suffered quietly to melt down to its proper level.—With respect to an accessory force, I think there should be a more general armament than that of the volunteers. I will not say to what length the system might have gone, indeed, if it had not been checked by Government in every way, and by every species of persecution. They resisted their right of resignation until they were compelled to yield to it, and in the same manner they fought every privilege for which the volunteers contended, and to which they were entitled by the acts under which they enrolled themselves. In this way the Government certainly laboured to their utmost to damp the zeal of the volunteers, if their zeal could be damped by any thing which Ministers could do. But without infringing on the volunteer system, I wish to go further, and to propose a general arming of the peasantry of the united kingdom; a force which, though not so good as the volunteers, as to fighting in battalion, will yet be of infinite value for the kind of attack with which we are threatened. I do not wish to propose the training of the peasantry to the use of arms in the hope of using them as an army; but it is a great thing to

embody all the physical force of the country, and to form it into a shape which might be contributory to the regular force. I should never have done if I were to attempt to enumerate all the advantages which would arise from arming the peasantry, and from employing them locally in the defence of their own immediate homes and neighbourhoods. Those who have seen the consequences of an armed peasantry in the case of an invading foe, can alone form an idea of the inestimable value of such a force. It sets a nation actually at ease against the most desperate attack of an enemy. An armed peasantry, with their geographical knowledge of their own territory, is irresistible. It is the natural strength to which, of all others, a free people in a cultivated country ought to look. Everything else may fail us. The volunteer system may relax. As the immediate danger disappears, as the threatened invasion is protracted, the volunteers may melt away. Your regular army would be too small to guard every part of so extensive a coast; but in a country so adapted to defence, so populous an armed peasantry taking advantage of every hill, of every lane, of every hedge, acquainted with every turn and pass, would make it impossible for any enemy to advance, or if advanced to return. I do not speak of them as of an army to fight battles; I speak of that surer and more fatal species of attack, which they would be instructed to make on an enemy, in which they would give them no respite, and from which the enemy could have no retreat. In every view of the subject it would be a most political thing to institute this sort of force. In cases of emergency, how much easier would it be to discipline men who had been previously used to some sort of weapon, than to discipline men who had never handled a firelock, and who knew not even by which end to hold it, or whether to draw the lock or the trigger? In the way of recruiting the army also, if all the young men were by a general law practised to the use of arms, though in the most unexpensive way, both as to money and time, how much more disposed would they be to enter into the service on any pressing call of their country? I know that some men pretend to deride the smock-frocked soldier, but they will not deride them who have felt their power. I do not wish you, however, to put an end to one force in order to create another. I wish this experiment to be tried, because it must be of the utmost advantage to every part of the service, and in every possible state of the country, both in time of peace and war. I know that the more you trust to the people, the more faithful

ful service they will render you, and that arms can be not only put into their hands with safety, but with use in the way of preventing tumult, of assisting the police, and of restraining depredation. I own I think it a most desirable thing to promote this species of civil defence even in time of peace, that the military may not be resorted to on every occasion. But in time of war what would be the inestimable value of such a force? Suppose the enemy landed in great and commanding numbers. Let us suppose, what however we do not believe will happen, that the event of a battle should be disastrous to the English army. With every possible respect for the bravery of our troops, the supposition ought to be imagined and the calamity guarded against. In that case what would be the consequence if you had an armed peasantry? That the enemy would reap no advantage beyond the actual field of battle. They would even after their victory remain in a state of positive impotence. They could not afterwards scour the country; they could not send to any town, village, or even to any farm for a single load of hay without a detachment and an escort. They must be broken into a thousand parts to provide themselves with food, and be enfeebled by their division; or otherwise they must be confined to the identical spot of their glory, while our own beaten army would have time to recover and to reinforce its ranks. I state it fairly, because we must view both sides of the question. The greatest courage engaged in the best cause does not always command success. But let us view the other side. Suppose, what is much more likely to happen, that an army of freemen fighting for the security of all that was dear to them should beat the invaders. What would be the consequence of a single victory to them? The annihilation of the enemy! It would not be as it is between contending armies, in a martial territory where the inhabitants were quiet spectators of the battle; but here a vanquished enemy could find no shelter, no suspension, no breathing time, no recovery. No rallying point could be found in a country where every man was armed, and where every hedge was an entrenchment. I recommend this species of defence the more earnestly because it will be the means of correcting all the errors into which we have fallen; and I must take blame to myself in common with others, for having suffered an assertion to stand as part of the preamble to the defence bill, which is utterly untenable in constitutional law. It certainly is impossible for the members of this House to watch over every

word and sentence of every bill that is brought in; and therefore the particular authors of each bill are looked to as more peculiarly responsible for glaring errors. I believe that 99 out of 100 acts pass without being critically and carefully examined, as they ought to be, by the members of the House, consistent with their strict and rigid duty. But it is in a particular way the duty of Ministers, that no bill shall be suffered to assert any false or dangerous doctrine, in the persuasion that it may pass unobserved in the hurry of legislation. In July 1803, the alarm of invasion was so imminent, according to Ministers, that the defence bill must be passed by acclamation; and the zeal of the country being aroused to meet the invasion, which was to take place in August, no time was to be lost in weighing and judging of the bill. Accordingly I find we overlooked a most serious declaration in the preamble of the bill, and which certainly, if I had seen, I should have exerted the utmost efforts of my mind to have corrected, namely, "that the King has a right to command all his liege subjects to take up arms," &c. a doctrine which, to be admitted as true, ought to have been qualified and defined. It may be said that his Majesty has the right to do justice; but he is to do justice according to law. And so is the prerogative of calling forth his people in arms. It must undoubtedly be said of any community, that they must possess the means of preserving themselves; and that, on the principle of the *salus populi suprema lex*, the power of calling forth the physical strength of the community must reside in it; and that the King, as the head, represents this community, and is the organ of its will. But this species of reasoning would justify the most arbitrary assertions; and all such reasoning the spirit of our constitution utterly reprobates. The rights which our Sovereign possesses are defined as well as limited. And this has been most sensibly as well as ably stated by a great Judge, who speaking of this sort of abstract right, made use of these words—"For I freely declare, that ancient precedents, unless supported by modern usage, in cases of prerogative, have little weight with me."—Nothing can be more true than these words of the learned Mr. Justice Foster; and nothing can be more applicable to this strange assertion in the preamble of this act. No such right can be claimed by the King. No such right, however, it may have been part of the undefined prerogative in ancient times, can be exercised after the words of the statute in the 25th of Edward III; a statute made in an epoch which I respect, because the statutes of that period were

were marked by their wisdom, and by the principles of sound legislation. In a statute of that year it is expressly declared, "no persons shall be liable to serve but such as are bound by their tenures." If, indeed, there were such a prerogative, it would be impracticable. The constitution has wisely planted an inseparable check over the abuse, and, thank God, not one of the ancient undefined prerogatives can be exercised against the liberties of the people. To what an extent, and to what complete overthrow of every thing for which our ancestors have successfully contended, would this right go? Money has been, perhaps by a strained metaphor, called the sinews of war. If his Majesty had the right of commanding the military service of his subjects, he must also be supposed to have the right of maintaining them; and so the power of the purse would be taken out of the hands of the representatives of the people. I state this only to shew how improper and unjustifiable it is to introduce such an expression into a bill, and how negligent it is to let it pass. And it is not in the preamble of this act only that we see a dangerous door open to abuse. Let us look, then, at the enactments of the general defence act, respecting this prerogative which is asserted to be inherent in his Majesty. It states that, in the event of invasion, or the appearance of the enemy in force upon the coast, it shall be lawful for his Majesty to call out the persons who are enrolled under this act in the different counties; that it shall be lawful to call them out in such proportion as shall seem meet—to place them in any regiment of regulars, militia, or fencibles—to put them under martial law, and march them to any part of the coast, &c. This act, therefore, without any limit or qualification of rank, age, or station, empowers the King to compel any individual, however unfit for military service, to serve in the ranks exactly on the footing of enlisted soldiers, to be subject to all the severities of military duty and of martial law. If this really be the prerogative of his Majesty, it is one which cannot be contemplated without anxiety. Not to suppose the existence of great and violent abuse, it is sufficient to know that such power is liable to abuse; and no man with the sentiments of freedom and the confidence of independence can feel perfectly easy to think that to a law so unmitigated and so unqualified he may be subject. Is it possible to reflect on such a power without seeing how it may be abused and perverted? It may be an extreme case, indeed, to state that its sweeping provisions give authority to the King to take the Prince

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Prince of Wales, place him under the command of his footman, and march him in that capacity against the enemy. I know that such a case is impossible, but it illustrates the boundless authority which the act confers, and which in many instances it is quite easy to conceive might be exercised. Might not a tradesman or a farmer be hurried away from his family and occupations, and placed under the command of a corporal or serjeant, their own servants? Persons of every situation may be pitched upon by malice or by revenge, and sent to perform military service for which they are unfit. I see that such a scheme of things does lie open to abuse, and the monstrous abuse and injustice with which the execution of it would be attended, must have prevented the attempt to carry it into effect at all. I do not understand exactly the mode in which these provisions are to be reduced to practice. If the quota of men to be furnished by a parish was to be fixed by ballot, the inconvenience might frequently be very great, even where a sense of abuse did not aggravate the case. The ballot might, without any distinction of rank, age, or circumstances, compel any man to serve in person. In truth, a principle more inconsistent with that sound and rational equality which all laws and all human institutions ought to aim at in the imposition of burdens, never was devised. In practice it must be productive of extreme inequality, hardship and grievance. From a true equality the principles of subordination flow, but in the operation of such measures as this, all distinctions are annihilated, and every thing is levelled under the discretion of the Crown. Indeed Ministers on some occasions have acknowledged enough to shew that they were themselves convinced that the general defence act could not be carried into practice. It was said by one of them, that the defence act would "have given way;" and so it must, for such extravagant powers could not have been exercised without an abuse that would have proved fatal to the measure. But still Ministers contended it had been of use, as it backed the volunteer system. What? was it then thought necessary to goad the people of this country forward in the defence of their houses, their property, and their liberties, by the terror of those severe provisions? I am certain that the spirit of the nation required no such spur. Why such bugbears then? Why thus compel the volunteers on, like a front rank by the bayonet of that behind it? But in truth what was this bugbear?—Ministers admit that this act might have *given way*! What was the value of this threat,
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this stimulus of the general defence act which had its use? At any rate, if the people wanted a spur, as they do not, would you employ a menace, which in fact had in it nothing that could really alarm? At least you ought not to threaten what you cannot enforce. I remember an anecdote of one of your predecessors, Sir, who is allowed to have maintained the dignity and authority of the chair, in a manner superior to all those who went before him, however he may have yielded to those who have come after him. It was a custom with that person, (Mr. Speaker Onslow) when any Member was guilty of an irregularity, to cry, "Take care, Sir, or I will name you." And on one occasion a Member ventured to whisper the Speaker, "And what would be the consequence if you did name me?" The Speaker replied, "*God only knows.*" Now in the same manner Ministers have thought it convenient to keep up the terror of the general defence act, in order to stimulate the volunteers; yet they are sensible that the menace would fail them, and if they were to be asked, what would be the consequence of their threat? their answer would be, "*God only knows;*" for no man could think of putting in practice a measure so pregnant with oppression and injustice. In the volunteer bill, which was lately so much the subject of discussion in the House, it was argued to be unjust that a farmer should, against his will, be deprived of the labour of his servant; and this provision, I understand, has been altered in the other House. But indeed it was of little consequence to talk of the hardship of the farmer being deprived of his servant, if he himself was liable to be taken, and sent to serve in the army or militia, in Cornwall, or Northumberland, or any other place the most remote from his abode. But, in truth, the very atrocity of the fact made it impossible to put it in execution; so that, in reality, it was as little calculated to be useful, as it was altogether unnecessary as a stimulus to the zeal and to the patriotism of the country. Having seen, therefore, that the general defence act was neither necessary *in terrorum*, nor could be of any avail as a bugbear, what practical good was it calculated to afford in strengthening our means of repelling invasion? I have repeatedly stated in this House, that I conceived it desirable that, in addition to our other means of defence, we should have an armed peasantry. Ministers themselves go so far as to say, that an armed peasantry may be of use to back the volunteers, as the latter will be of service to back the regular army. They have never, however, proposed any rational practical means by which
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this advantage can be obtained. Let us, therefore, go into the Committee, and discuss the subject. Let us there try if we cannot devise some mode of strengthening and confirming whatever is well conceived in the present system of defence, by that which all consider useful and important, though in different degrees. Let us there discuss how the peasantry are to be called out, armed, and arrayed. Let us discuss how, in case of emergency, they are to be employed; how far, if fire-arms cannot be found, pikes may not with advantage be put into their hands; and whether it may be necessary to place them under martial law; or by what other code they may be rendered subject to discipline. These are fit objects for discussion in the Committee, and there alone, indeed, can they be discussed with advantage. There too we may revise, amend, and improve the different measures that have already been passed for the public defence; there we may correct their errors, remove their contradictions, and increase their effect. I have already hinted the general importance of calling forth the exertions of an armed peasantry, and in this, even they who think more highly of the volunteers will perfectly concur, because the armed peasantry are not intended to supersede the volunteers. As to a detailed plan on this head, I do not propose to trouble the House with any at present. Neither am I prepared to say how far this service should be voluntary or compulsory. That the voluntary zeal of the country would supply every thing that could be desired I am perfectly convinced. At the same time if it should be thought necessary to make the service in some degree compulsory, I will not say that it might not be proper to make some provision for it. Nevertheless, the means of calling forth that aid must be freed from that injustice and inequality to which the general defence act would now be liable. How, likewise, is this force to be armed? And if muskets cannot be furnished to all, surely those who are most inclined to despise the pike, must admit that the pike is a much better weapon than spades or pitch-forks, with which alone the peasantry are now armed, even were they so arrayed and organised as to be capable of being employed with effect. These, however, and many other questions which are naturally connected with the subject, and which will no doubt be more particularly insisted upon this evening, will be proper for the consideration of the Committee, which it is the purpose of my motion to institute. I shall therefore conclude with moving, "That it be referred to a Committee to revise the several bills which have passed this House, during the last and present

sent sessions of Parliament, for the defence of the country, and to consider of such further measures as may be necessary to render the said defence more complete and permanent."

The Chancellor of the Exchequer—Sir, I am induced to offer myself to your notice at this moment, rather than at a more advanced period of the debate, for the purpose of combating the arguments which the hon. Gentleman has urged at considerable length, in support of one of the most extraordinary motions, that, within my parliamentary experience, has ever been submitted to the consideration of this House. I have another inducement also, arising from some incidental circumstances in the speech you have just heard, for trespassing, at this early hour, upon the attention of Gentlemen. The hon. Gentleman has alluded to the zeal and unanimity which at present (even he is candid enough to confess) pervades all ranks and classes of society; but his approbation is qualified by the observation, that it is a zeal and unanimity solely to be attributed to the fear of invasion; inferring thereby, that his Majesty's Ministers; neither by their measures nor their conduct, have conducted either to excite or maintain it. The hon. Gentleman has adverted to some discussions which took place at the commencement of the war; but it must be in the recollection of Gentlemen, that the observations which fell from him on one of those occasions, drew forth the reprehension of the House; on another question, I had the benefit of that hon. Gentleman's support. When a motion was made, the tendency of which was to condemn me and my colleagues for engaging in the war, that hon. Gentleman refused to support it. By his vote on that question, he did, in the fullest and most unqualified manner, absolve and acquit us entirely from the guilt of having commenced that war. But, Sir, we do not depend for our justification on the accidental approbation of that hon. Gentleman, great as the effect of his approbation might be. We build it on much more solid and extended grounds, the almost unanimous vote of this House, by which it has been sanctioned and confirmed. I come now to the hon. Gentleman's present motion, certainly one of the most extraordinary that has been ever brought before this House, for which there is no precedent in the parliamentary history of this country, to which there is nothing analogous in the parliamentary usages of the country, and which I am well justified in describing as a measure most uncommon and extraordinary, when coupled with the strange and singular matter that the hon.

Gentleman has contrived to mix with it. The object of his motion is to appoint a Committee, to revise the Acts that have been passed for the defence of the country, and to consider and provide adequate means for the protection of it in future. Sir, there is no man in this House who more highly values the privileges of Parliament than I do; there is no man in the House who will be more ready to assert and maintain them. I know that by the constitution it is invested, and it is fitting it should be, with very great and extensive powers, and I will not deny its right to institute a Committee for the purposes that are proposed. But, Sir, while I admit the power of the House to do this, I think I may safely apply to the discretion of Gentlemen, that they will not, by supporting the motion, countenance the establishment of a Committee, which, in its proceedings and result, must terminate, and become, to all intents and purposes, a Committee of a purely military nature. Such a Committee would be rather a novel and uncommon mode of manifesting either the authority or the prudence of this House, and one to which, I am persuaded, it will not easily recur, except upon much stronger grounds than the hon. Gentleman has brought forward in support of his motion of this night. There is something peculiar also in the matter of the hon. Gentleman's motion. For reasons peculiar to himself, no doubt, but which the House will have little difficulty in guessing at, he has totally omitted all mention or allusion whatever to the navy, and has wholly excluded from his consideration the four hundred thousand volunteers, composing so essential a part of our means of defence. But this peculiarity is not to be exclusively appropriated to the purport of his motion, or the various details that it is intended to embrace. He has so worded it, as to take in all descriptions of persons in this House, with all their floating and contradictory opinions; one man objecting to too great an extension of one part of our force, another lamenting any attempt at its diminution; some recommending a greater and some a lesser addition to the regular army, and others, who differ as to what particular species of naval force we should employ; some preferring a large number of small vessels, and some a small number of large vessels; all, all these the hon. Gentleman has found means to gratify, in their individual caprices and opinions, and to include them all within the compass of this sweeping and general motion. I come now to another part of the hon. Gentleman's argument, in which he has said that he did

not attach much credit to the apprehension of invasion. The hon. Gentleman, as I stated before, has been pleased to declare, that the present unanimity arose entirely from the actual danger of the country. I know not by what dexterity of argument the hon. Gentleman will be able to reconcile those two observations, that, as he says, there is no danger of invasion, and again, that our unanimity is entirely owing to it. Nor am I very solicitous on that head, when I recollect, that during the last war, that hon. Gentleman continually asserted, that it was the injustice of that war which prevented us from being unanimous then. During that war, I believe it cannot be imputed to that hon. Gentleman, that he ever came forward with any proposition to avert any danger with which the country might have been menaced; nor during the actual hostility, has he ever favoured his Majesty's Ministers with any project or suggestion of his, or given them, in any way whatever, the advantage of his great talents. Indeed the hon. Gentleman has said, that if Ministers had frankly communicated to him that they were really apprehensive of danger, he would have concurred in any augmentation to the public force they might have thought necessary for the public defence. But, Sir, was it necessary that this should have been made the subject of particular and specific communication to him, or to any thinking man in this country? Is it possible that hon. Gentleman would have shut his eyes, and closed up his enlightened mind against the active, unceasing, and immoderate ambition of France, stimulated and invited to the exertion of that ambition, and possessing the means of gratifying it, in the possession of so many hundred leagues of sea coast, extending almost from the Texel to the Adriatic? In the course of the hon. Gentleman's speech he has adverted, but with a partiality I have reason to complain of, to the declarations of Ministers respecting the probable duration of the peace of Amiens. Sir, we never did pledge ourselves for the continuance of that peace. On the contrary, we always thought, and omitted no opportunity of declaring so, that the best security for the continuance of peace, was to impress France, and not only France, but all Europe, with a conviction that our strength, our spirit, and our means, were whole and inexhausted; and that although we were willing to adhere to the peace we had made, we were ready for war, whenever insult or aggression, on the part of any power, should compel us to it.¹¹³ It was, Sir, from these motives, that our peace establishment so greatly ex-

seeded the peace establishment of 1792, an augmentation which brought down on us the censure of the hon. Gentleman. I come now to the hon. Gentleman's motion, narrowed and restricted to a degree inconsistent with his usual candour, and unworthy of his great mind. He has directed his observations principally to the regular and militia force, omitting the navy and volunteers, and has recommended, with his accustomed zeal and perseverance, the adoption of his favourite project of adding an armed peasantry. He has chiefly relied upon two points for the appointment of this Committee, from which he affects to suppose, that so many advantages may be derived: one is, that the pernicious principle of recruiting by competition may be abolished in it, and next, that the extent of service may be altered from life to term of years. I trust I shall be able to prove, to the satisfaction of the House, that it would not be justified, that it would not be prudent nor advisable in it, to proceed to the formation of such a Committee, upon such slight and insufficient reasons as have been mentioned. My noble Friend who sits near me (Lord Castlereagh) has stated, from authentic documents, that although the recruiting for general service was not so great at present, as it was on former occasions, yet that it was as great as circumstances gave us right to expect. When Gentlemen, Sir, are informed, that the persons who are entrusted with his Majesty's Government, were compelled to collect and take out of your population no less than 200,000 men for the purpose of recruiting your army and your navy, and that within the space of little more than twelve months, they will cease to express any surprise that the recruiting service should have experienced a momentary cessation; when I declare to this House, on the part of that Government, that there is at present a regular force, in this country and in Ireland, composed of troops of the line and militia, of no less than 184,000, I trust it will be acknowledged that his Majesty's Ministers have not been remiss or improvident in making adequate preparations for the defence of the country. When Gentlemen reflect upon the difficulties we had to encounter, that we had the militia to raise, that we had the army of the line to recruit, that we had the army of reserve to establish, that we had the defence act to prepare, and that we have a regular army, line and militia, of 184,000, that we have 400,000 volunteers, that we have 27,000 sea-fencibles, independent of troops in other points, in garrisons and in colonies, making in the whole a force little short of

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eight hundred thousand men, and greater in number by 200,000 than the greatest exertion of the enemy can bring forward; I say, Sir, when such difficulties and such successes are weighed against each other, I trust the House and the country will admit that we are not that incapable and incompetent description of men the hon. Mover of the question before you endeavours to represent us. This, Sir, could be proved by documents the most authentic and irrefragable; and though, for many reasons which will be obvious to Gentlemen, I feel strong objection to the production of such information, yet I will consent to give those Gentlemen, who make the want of it a ground of complaint and accusation against Ministers, an account of the military and naval force of the country as it actually is, but upon the express condition that they do not ask for the distribution of it. I am persuaded, Sir, that if such an account were laid on the table, it would be the best, I will go farther and say, it would be a decisive answer to the best argument the hon. Gentleman has urged in support of his motion. The hon. Gentleman has gone at considerable length into the consideration of that principle expressed in the defence act, that it is his Majesty's prerogative to call upon the services of all ranks of his subjects capable of bearing arms, in case of invasion. Sir, in discussing that bill, that principle was frequently alluded to in debate, but never opposed; for it was admitted, generally admitted, that his Majesty possessed such a prerogative in case of invasion, and the only question was, I well remember, whether he could not resort to it before invasion. The hon. Gentleman affects to acquit Ministers of any blame in introducing the assertion of that particular prerogative into that bill, by presuming that in their anxiety to prepare for the defence of the country, a solitary instance of recognizing it might have escaped their observation. Sir, I desire that principle may be thoroughly examined and inquired into; I desire that it be not taken *pro admissio*, but that it may stand on its fair, and general constitutional grounds. With respect to the hon. Gentleman's motion, I am to look for other motives, than those he has thought prudent to avow, for proposing it. I am to seek for other reasons, for a motion peculiarly calculated to collect all the floating opinions of the House, and to create such an opposition to his Majesty's Ministers as would tend to produce a change of Administration. If that be the object of the hon. Gentleman's motion, let him state so, broadly and unequivocally; let him produce some specific

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accusation; let him bring forward some direct, explicit charge; and let him take the sense of the House on it; but let him not bring it forward in this covert and underhand mode, and by a *detour* endeavour to stigmatize those he has not the courage to accuse boldly and manfully. Let not the hon. Gentleman, I say, have recourse to a paltry expedient of this nature; it is unworthy of him. If we are fairly attacked, if we are accused upon specific grounds, we are ready and willing to meet the charge, and we shall find, I trust, no difficulty in defending and justifying ourselves upon fair, open, and constitutional principles. To the motion of the hon. Gentleman I feel the strongest objections; and I am bound to resist it upon every consideration of prudence and of public policy. I call upon every Member of this House to look at the state of the country, and to say, whether such a Committee is practicable or advisable. To accomplish all the objects proposed by it, you must bring officers from their duty, with great inconvenience to the public service, and possibly with greater danger to the public safety; you must collect documents and information from various quarters; you must have all the records and accounts, the plans and the proposals that are possessed, or have been submitted to the different departments, laid on that table, and examined, and, what is no trivial objection, made public, before you can come to a right, or indeed to any conclusion, as to whether the naval and military force of the country has been properly employed and administered. I do not mean to say, that a great state necessity may not justify the appointment of such a Committee; but I leave it to the wisdom of the House to determine, if any proofs of such necessity have been advanced in support of the present dangerous and extraordinary measure. It is upon these grounds I oppose the motion of the hon. Gentleman, and I hope a great majority of this House will agree with me in opinion, that no sound reasons have been urged to recommend it; that no necessity has been proved to justify it; and that as it has been brought forward from motives different from what are professed, it is unworthy to be entertained or adopted by the House.

Mr. Pitt—Before I proceed to explain to the House the reasons which induce me to give my cordial and zealous support to the motion of the hon. Gentleman opposite, I cannot help saying a few words upon the mode of argument pursued by the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down. The right hon. Gentleman says, that the motion

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tion of the hon. Gentleman is calculated to embrace numbers who entertain different views and opinions respecting the system of public defence. The motion, indeed, is undoubtedly calculated to obtain the concurrence, not of those merely who differ on minute grounds; not of those who make insignificant criticisms upon the various measures of Administration; but it is calculated to unite all those who have gravely and dispassionately weighed the dangers and difficulties of our situation; and those who by a careful retrospect of the conduct of Government, previous to that war which they have declared to be so long impending, and subsequent to its commencement, have arrived at a perfect conviction of the inability of Ministers to devise, or to execute, any measures adequate to the demands of the public safety, and to the arduous nature of the conflict. The motion is calculated to unite all those who, by the experience of the last twelve months, in which Ministers have exhausted their minds in attempts to modify, to amend, or to improve the various measures for the public defence that have been suggested; and who still are so far behind what the circumstances of this eventful moment required, what the resources of the empire would have afforded, and the zeal and spirit of the country have so cheerfully supplied, to perfect the system of public defence: in a word, a motion calculated to unite all those who conscientiously believe, that from and under the present Ministers no measures of suitable vigour and energy are to be expected; that no fair chance can be given to the country that its safety will be sufficiently provided for, its resources wisely called forth, and its power successfully exerted. It is in this view that I consider the motion, for almost all the reasons urged by the right hon. Mover, and for others which he did not state. The hon. Gentleman below, however, who has enjoyed the opportunity of acquiring an intimate knowledge of the proceedings of the House, says, that neither in his recollection of the journals has such a motion ever been made, nor even in his imagination can he conceive that any thing so extraordinary could disgrace them. But if it were true that the motion is extraordinary, perhaps it would be sufficient to urge, what has often been urged on other occasions by the hon. Gentleman himself, that extraordinary circumstances frequently call for extraordinary modes of proceeding. If the motion were indeed extraordinary, it might be answer enough to say that the crisis is new and extraordinary; it would be answer enough to state, that after a war which has

has now lasted a year, and after an interval of peace, shown in the manifestoes of Ministers to have been a perpetual scene of aggression, they had brought forward nothing but what was contradictory, feeble and inadequate; that whatever was done was ruined by delay, hesitation, and uncertainty; that if they ever seemed for a moment to be roused into vigour, it was quickly succeeded by a conduct that seemed a complete detraction and disavowal of the momentary impulse. It is melancholy indeed to reflect that, after time for mature consideration, after repeated trials, no system had been found which could afford us that security to which the country was entitled, and that no plans had been produced by which we were likely to bring the war to a successful termination. The right hon. Gentleman says, that Ministers do not greatly differ from those who think an armed peasantry calculated to be usefully employed, but they prefer the volunteer force. The question, however, is not of substituting but of adding. It is not that the volunteer system shall be abolished, but that an additional force in aid of them is to be obtained. If, then, Ministers approve of such a mode of increasing the means of defence, why do they not announce their intention of taking some steps to obtain that advantage? However Gentlemen may differ as to the degree of utility, the mode of application, the local circumstances in which an armed peasantry would be desirable, it is not disputed that, in many situations, the efforts of the peasantry would be of the greatest advantage. Why then does not the hon. Gentleman propose to enter upon the consideration without delay? Have we not been told by Ministers for these six months past, that the invasion might take place perhaps within 24 hours? Is it a time to procrastinate any wise measures, any efficient plans of defence, at a time when we see that the enemy have surmounted many of those preliminary difficulties which some months ago were deemed invincible? Have not the enemy supplied those means of conveyance which it was at first thought must render all the threats of the enemy vain and futile? Have they not, in the face of that navy which Ministers so confidently boast has been carried to its utmost strength, and has been distributed with the most perfect judgment—have they not, within sight of our shores and in defiance of our obstruction, assembled in one port between 13 and 1400 vessels, capable of conveying from 50 to 100 men each? Have they not proved that all our reasonings about the impossibility of sailing from one port, the

the difficulty of a concerted attack, the obstacle of winds and tides, were unfounded, and that the contempt we entertained for their preparations and for their menaces were ill founded and unwarranted? With such facts before us, ought we to suspend or delay any means that can contribute to our safety? We ought not to treat with contempt, or with a false security pronounce impracticable, the projects of a bold, enterprising, and desperate, though often fortunate enemy, and one, too, that never stood in the way of good fortune by a dread of bad. If, then, an armed peasantry is calculated to be of any utility in Essex, Kent, or Sussex, in opposing an enemy and retarding their progress to the metropolis, it is fit that no time should be lost in devising a plan for obtaining this additional aid. The hon. Gentleman next contends, that the motion is unconstitutional; but what is there unconstitutional in referring to the consideration of a Committee of the whole House, which I understand to be the object of the motion [Mr. Fox nodded assent] certain acts passed by the Legislature, so that they may be modified, altered, and improved? Is the hon. Gentleman who so long filled that chair, with so much credit to himself and advantage to the House, so little acquainted with parliamentary usages as not to know, that in a Committee of the whole House alone several proceedings can regularly originate? Matters of religion, grievance, trade, finance, &c. must first be discussed in a Committee of the whole House. If, then, questions on those subjects must originate in a Committee, can there be any scruple to refer to a similar Committee, measures, the object of which is to defend every thing that is dear and valuable to a state, the religion which exalts, the commerce which enriches, the laws which regulate and protect? Is there any thing extraordinary, any thing dangerous, then, in the present motion? Will it be said that the system of defence is so good that there is nothing to be added to it? Is the experience of it in its fruits and effects such as to encourage us to rely with implicit confidence in the energy and resources of Ministers? What measures have they ever adopted that have not been thwarted by some other of their measures? What efficient plan has been proposed for the recruiting the regular army? Can we indulge the vain and chimerical hope, that, without any new regulations as to the period of service, such as those proposed by the right hon. Gentleman, recruits will be obtained for eight guineas, when they could hardly be procured for forty or fifty pounds? Is

it upon the wisdom, the vigilance, and the energy of these Ministers that we can rely, when we have seen that no one measure for the public defence can they be truly said to have originated, when several they have retarded or enfeebled? I am satisfied that some plan for the permanent recruiting of the army ought to be settled, and that we ought with all dispatch to proceed to that important subject. But neglecting the regular army, have Ministers improved and perfected that system of the volunteers in which they have spent so much time? I venture to affirm, that the volunteer system is still far from that state of perfection to which it might be carried. The army of reserve, instead of being suspended, should be modified. In regard to fortifications too, in which, hitherto, so little has been done, I will venture to state, that due precautions in that department have been much neglected, and that many things have been omitted to be done, which, in case of invasion, would tend both to save the lives of men and to check the progress of an invader. From all that I have heard too on the subject of the navy, and in spite of that magnificent catalogue of ships which Ministers have produced, and which I shall not at present dissect, I must repeat, that the conduct of that branch of our defence has not been such as the public had a right to expect, and upon this subject I may take an opportunity to state circumstances that will astonish the House, and the country. These and many other considerations form the most conclusive argument in favour of the motion, and though the right hon. Gentleman who made it, did not dilate on these topics, he naturally expected, and stated his expectation, that they would be taken up by other speakers in the course of the debate. It is true that Ministers on this as on former occasions have given us a pompous enumeration of the force of the country. I have heard that statement with pride. It affords the most consolatory evidence of what the country is capable of doing. But I and other Members of this House have at least as good a right to exult in that survey of our strength as Ministers. We have not been wanting in our exertions to contribute to call forth the spirit of the country, and to organize its strength. That spirit and exertion, however, belong to the country, and are not to be ascribed to the direction or the energy of the Government. Indeed, if there be any who ought peculiarly to separate that pride from any feeling of personal merit, it is the present Ministers, who have had so little share in the national energy. No one measure can they claim

claim as their own; no one measure have they improved, and perfected; very many they have weakened by their delays, and destroyed by their incongruities. Whatever then the spirit and zeal of a free and brave people may have been under the sense of danger, ought fairly to be separated from the tardiness, languor and imbecility of Ministers in every thing of which they have assumed the direction. Ministers boast of what others have suggested or voluntary public zeal has effected, as if what was done were perfectly adequate to our security. But is it enough to have provided against the danger of a final conquest? Enough has not been done unless we have adopted every practicable and rational means of checking the enemy should they invade our shores, with the least sacrifice of life, with the least waste of the public resources, with a rapidity that will disappoint the enemy's projects of devastation. Enough has not been done unless every thing has been provided by which in the shortest space we may be enabled to defeat the enemy with that signal overthrow and destruction, as will for ever deter them from a repetition of the attack, and for ever relieve the country from the alarm and anxiety of invasion. I do not mean to say that the enemy would, according to all human calculation, succeed in their designs even had we no other means of defence but those which now exist; but have we reason to believe that our strength is yet arrayed in the best manner, that our forces are distributed at the proper points, so as to act with the most decisive effect? Unless this be done (as I fear it is not), it is not enough to say that we have 184,000 regulars and militia, and 400,000 volunteers; and indeed when it is proved by their own statements that the resources of the country are so great, it forms an additional ground of censure against Ministers if our system of defence be not adequate to every demand.—As to the observations which have been made upon the amount of force which should have been kept up during the peace, and the proportion which existed at the renewal of the war, whatever I may think with respect to the opinion held by the hon. Gentleman who opened the debate upon a former occasion, I cannot without surprise hear from the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down that he conceived the force which was maintained during the peace as amply sufficient to meet any probable emergency; for that right hon. Gentleman was in possession of much knowledge of the disposition of the enemy which must have satisfied his mind of the propriety of making more extensive

preparations for a state of hostility. That knowledge the right hon. Gentleman, to be sure, studiously concealed from Parliament, and, therefore, the hon. Gentleman upon the opposite bench was, with many others, incompetent to form any opinion of the impending danger; but not so his Majesty's Ministers, who had yet neglected to provide against it. They who, by a manifesto since published to the world, explained that there were grounds almost from immediately after the conclusion of the peace to complain of the conduct and to suspect the intentions of Bonaparte, had yet omitted to devise measures to counteract his designs, and to put the country in a state fitted for the description of hostility to be apprehended. In this state the country is not, in point of fact, even now placed; and this forms one of my reasons for concurring in the motion before the House, because, as they who thought the peace not likely to continue, did not prepare for war, and who, since the war has commenced, have not preserved that course of vigorous exertion which the situation of the empire calls for, they are not those in whom I would confide for the establishment of our security. Ministers foresaw the war, and yet they did not attempt to ballot for the militia, as they should have done, during the peace. They should have availed themselves of that period, when they must, according to their own confessions since so repeatedly made, have contemplated war as something more than probable, to set every means in motion of defending the country against invasion. The observations they were enabled to make, at the close of the last war, of the plans and purpose of Bonaparte, were sufficient to assure them that his first notion was an invasion of this country, which the short period that elapsed between the establishment of peace upon the Continent and the conclusion of the treaty of Amiens did not qualify him to attempt; but the progress of his then preparations served to shew that his resolution was not to make desultory attacks upon us, but to do that which he has since accomplished, viz. to collect a large force upon some part of the coast most convenient for the purpose of making a descent upon this country. What then are we to think of those Ministers who, with such an opportunity of observation, overlooked renewing the ballot for that important part of our force, the militia, during peace? And how did they act towards the volunteers, on whose gallantry they now profess so much to rely? The House must have in recollection the letters which Ministers addressed to that body of men during the peace, which letters were so much calculated rather to damp

damp than to animate and encourage the zeal of those corps. But this was not all; for, under circumstances peculiarly suspicious for the purpose, and with the prospects before them I have already mentioned, they refused to attend to a plan suggested to them for providing a certain resource for the recruiting and supply of our regular army. This plan was founded upon the same principle as that of the army of reserve, with the addition of that which I took occasion lately to lay before the House, and which, if adopted when any opinion was first urged to Ministers, would have furnished the means of adding to our army, with all possible expedition, not less than 40 or 50,000 men. This plan has, I admit, been since adopted in part; and I shall certainly feel it my duty to urge the adoption of the whole of it again and again. The Committee proposed by the motion I conceive the most convenient place for entering into the detail of this and other measures for the public defence—to no branch of which I perceive with regret have Ministers attended in due time, and to the execution of none of which do they appear to be adequate. Passing by all the omissions I complain of during the period of peace; drawing a veil over their conduct on that occasion altogether; and supposing the war recommenced as much to the surprise of Ministers as to that of many persons in this House and the country; supposing that they were not at all prepared to expect it, let us only look at their proceedings since that event, and let us examine how far their measures have been so contrived or executed as to justify a hope, much less an opinion, of safety, to be derived from their exertion. The first part of their plan of defence, and that to which they seemed principally to look, related to volunteers. This topic has, I am aware, been already very fully discussed, and on that account overlooked by the hon. mover of the proposition before the House; but upon this point I would wish to ask of Ministers whether they foresaw, or had even a remote idea, at the commencement of hostilities, that this description of our force would have extended so far; whether they contemplated that it ever should be so numerous? It was known by those who had any knowledge of their sentiments, who had any conversation with Ministers, that they had no such intentions, and that, on the contrary, they expressed their disapprobation of the policy of their predecessors in allowing the volunteer system to enlarge so much. This fact I allude to merely to shew that they are entitled to no praise for the multiplication of the volunteers; and to state that the spirit which produced the increase of that body arose

arose out of the discussions of this House; a spirit which, as Ministers themselves admitted, far outvied their calculation or hopes; and also, as it seemed, exceeded their power of direction, for they afterwards thought proper to check and restrain it. So much as to the origin of the volunteer system. But how did Ministers proceed to carry that system into execution? Why, without going much at length into this part of the subject, which I do not mean to do at present I will merely remark on the case of exemptions, which have been much and very justly objected to. The propriety of granting these exemptions I never could see; certain it is that they were never necessary; for the volunteers for the most part required no such thing in the shape of encouragement to offer their services, and many of them were not at all aware when they did engage that any exemptions were to be granted; on the contrary, it is notorious that they were in several districts actually subscribing a certain sum each to purchase substitutes for any of their body which might be ballotted for the militia. Such was the state of the volunteers when the act of Parliament was passed, with the strong recommendation of Ministers, for allowing exemptions, clogged however with such conditions that the measure was not to be well understood. In another part of this act of Ministers, there was something still less intelligible with respect to a volunteer's right of resignation, upon which Ministers had evinced the most complete want of penetration and foresight. Had they judged wisely, they never would have attempted to dispute this right; for, paradoxical as it may seem, nothing tends more to preserve discipline among those corps than the undisputed exercise of this right; and the reason is this, that, while a volunteer has the right of leaving a corps, he cannot object to any regulation that may be deemed necessary by a commanding officer for the promotion of order and discipline in such corps, the private having his choice to submit or resign: but as to the act of Ministers, the Attorney General, for whose judgment and learning I entertain the most unfeigned respect, interpreted the law upon resignations in one way, and the Court of King's Bench in another. Ministers, in this contradiction, thought proper to circulate the opinion of the former as that to be acted upon by the volunteers, although they have since avowed that they did not agree with that opinion, and that they intended to introduce a declaratory law upon the subject. This I must class among the most unaccountable proceedings of Ministers.

Ministers. As to the volunteer system generally, according to its present constitution, it appears to me to have several radical errors, and principally as to the mode in which the volunteers are distributed over the face of the country. When they were forming, and particularly when it was determined to limit their numbers, regard should have been had to the proportion proper to be assigned to each district. With that view, it would have been right to consider the difference between the inland and maritime counties, which were the more probable points of attack, and which was the most important to preserve. Our great naval arsenals, and those places which are most contiguous to our principal manufacturing, ought of course to be the first objects of Government, in settling the relative proportion of volunteers which the several districts should be allowed to furnish: allowed I call it, for it was at the discretion of Government to accept the services of many corps which they rejected, and generally without any reference to the consideration of local defence which I have mentioned. When they thought proper to limit the volunteers to six times the number of the militia, and for what reason I cannot divine, they put Staffordshire and Derbyshire quite on a par with the maritime counties. No distinction was made in favour of those districts which lie most convenient to the enemy's coast, and which are most likely to be the first points of attack. Can any man say that there was any thing like policy in such an arrangement, or that indeed there is to be found in any part of the structure or execution of the volunteer system, so far as Ministers are concerned, that which can deserve the character of discretion, or the approval of a statesman? There was, in fact, no part of the conduct pursued by Government towards the volunteers which did not form some ground for complaint, which did not offer some evidence of wavering and inconsistency. The House has witnessed the part they took at the close of the last session, when an hon. Gentleman on the other side (Mr. Sheridan) undertook to panegyric the zeal and gallantry of the volunteers. When that hon. Gentleman, two days before the session closed, thought proper, and, in the opinion of many intelligent respectable Members, very prematurely, to move a vote of thanks to the volunteers, he stated that such vote was not only a just acknowledgment for the patriotism they who were then embodied had manifested, but that it would operate to encourage further voluntary offers of service. Ministers applauded warmly the motion of the hon. Gentleman, but how did they afterwards

wards act? The hon. Gentleman moved at the same time, that there should be laid before the House, at its meeting after the recess, a list of such new corps as should volunteer; but there was another list which the hon. Gentleman neglected to move for, namely, of all the corps which should be reduced or rejected in the same interval (*a laugh*). Had the hon. Gentleman done so, he would have seen what use had been made of his motion, for the first step taken by Ministers almost immediately after its adoption was, to suspend the progress of that voluntary zeal which the hon. Gentleman, in common with every man who valued the character and safety of the country, so much admired. Ministers determined at once, that the volunteers should not be increased any further, but that, on the contrary, their numbers should be diminished. The notice of this determination was speedily circulated among the volunteers, accompanied by the hon. Gentleman's vote of thanks. Thus the volunteers were complimented for that, which Government at the same time told them they did not wish for, they would not accept. There is a word in French, *remercier*, which literally implies returning thanks for proffered services that it is not intended to accept, and this word has close analogy to the conduct of Ministers in the communication of the motion of thanks, which they agreed in, in company with the strange resolution which I have already mentioned. In regard to the enrolment of volunteer corps, so far as such enrolment is connected with the provisions of the defence act, I must again repeat the complaint I have often made, of the total omission of Government to execute the powers vested in them by that act, and any difficulties that have arisen in the progress of the ballot, I do conceive to be attributable to the non-exercise of the power I have referred to. As to the refusal of adequate pecuniary and military aid to the volunteers, I must observe that it is amongst the most culpable and inconsistent part of the conduct of Ministers. Without going minutely into the consequences of such conduct, which it would be more convenient to detail in the proposed Committee, I have only at present to remark, that whatever difference of opinion may exist between my hon. Friend on the lower bench (Mr. Windham) and me with respect to the volunteers, and the practicability of rendering them perfect in military discipline, there can be no difference between us as to this point, that they ought to be furnished

nished with the best instruction that is attainable, and both he and I have a right to complain of Ministers for not following up their own principle, by giving the necessary aid to promote the improvement of the volunteers. My hon. Friend has always maintained that the volunteers cannot be rendered equal to, or fit to act with regular troops; but Ministers have uniformly resisted this opinion. Why then have they not provided adequately for the execution of their own ideas? No, they have only allowed pay for 20 days in a year, although in the opinion of all military men no new raised regiment of the regular army, with all the advantages of subordination, martial law, &c. could be disciplined fit for service in less than six weeks, or two months. Will any man say that so short a period should be deemed sufficient for the discipline of the volunteers? But I shall be told probably that it was expected the volunteers would, independently of the 20 days, attend to drill on every Sunday. If they were, I should maintain, that, Sundays included, the time was not sufficient to instruct them, and should not be relied on in the existing circumstances of the country, when we are daily menaced with invasion—that invasion which Ministers have been perpetually telling us was daily to be expected since the middle of last summer. Notwithstanding this apprehension, such has been the behaviour of Ministers; that I much fear, if the enemy should not attack us until even the middle of next summer, he would find the volunteers very imperfectly disciplined. I cannot help expressing my surprise that Ministers could have ever seriously calculated upon the probability that the labouring classes, of whom so many of the volunteers consist, would be so prompt to devote the only day they have for recreation and repose to the study of military discipline. It certainly did not betray any policy or consideration so to calculate; but even supposing they were so to assemble, and also to attend the 20 days, how were they to attain the instruction desired from the present mode, and from that which has prevailed uniformly? I suggested to Ministers a plan of instruction, which I was told should be considered; but as they have never yet acted upon it, nor appear at all to consider it, their promise of consideration upon this, as well as upon other points, reminds me of a practice in the legislative assembly of a neighbouring nation (the United Provinces of Holland), in which when it was determined to get rid of a question, it was taken *ad referendum*, which meant to take no more notice of it. The nature of the pro-

ject I thought it my duty to recommend to Ministers, related particularly to that which I have often mentioned in this House. For the advancement of the discipline of the volunteers, I urged the necessity of appointing adjutants to a certain number of men. This has been in part acceded to, but in what manner? An adjutant is appointed to such corps only as amount to 400 men, and to them only in case they exercise 80 days in the year, although the men are allowed pay but for 20 days. Where, I would put it to the common sense of any man, can be found a stronger instance of weakness and inconsistency than this order furnishes? No provision is made for the pay of the adjutant unless the corps exercise 80 days, for one-fourth of which only the men are made any allowance. Is not this alone enough to expose the mind of Ministers, to shew their disacquaintance with the means of executing their own purposes? Indeed, I am perfectly convinced of their want of vigour; every circumstance serves to shew it, and I have therefore the strongest conviction upon my mind that they are incapable of acting upon any thing like system—of adopting or executing any well digested or energetic plan for the defence of the country. I do not of course place any hope on their exertions, and therefore concur in the propriety of the proposed Committee, where every question connected with our security may be fully investigated. One reason, I recollect, for so tardily adopting the plan for the appointment of adjutants was the difficulty of procuring officers from the line to fill those stations. I recommended that serjeant majors should be chosen; but to this I was told that serjeant majors could not be persuaded to give up their situations for such adjutancies, unless they were allowed half pay. I saw no good reason for declining to make this allowance, and I therefore advised it in December last. I was promised that the subject should be taken into consideration. I afterwards applied in March to know the result of the consideration, but I was told that no decision was made, and I understand it is undecided still, while the discipline of the volunteers does and has for months back so imperatively called for an immediate decision respecting it, although this was one of the defects in the volunteer system which Government promised to cure. When before last Christmas an application was made to Ministers with regard to the confusion which prevailed among the volunteers, the gentlemen who applied were desired to wait until after the Christmas recess, when a digested plan

plan would be brought forward by Ministers which should remove and prevent the recurrence of the evils complained of, and communicate to the volunteer system all the perfection of which it was susceptible. This digested plan has been laid before the House, and at length made its way, after various alterations, through it. Other alterations were added in the House of Lords; and now it is returned to us, there is scarcely one feature remaining of the original measure—of the well digested plan of Ministers. The suggestions made to them by others they reluctantly adopted, and the object of those suggestions they in some instances have almost defeated, as in the case of inviting the volunteers to permanent duty, and applying the guinea proposed to be given them as bounty, which is to be distributed in such a way as to hold out no inducement to the men or benefit to their families. Ministers have been equally injudicious in every other project of defence, from the army of reserve to the enrolment of classes under the general defence act—an act which I had the honour of a large share in suggesting, and I lament much that Ministers did not adopt it at a more early period: but the fact is, that so far from Ministers having spontaneously taken any vigorous proceeding for the defence of the country since the commencement of the war, I state broadly that no part of the measures for the increase of our military establishment has originated with them (*a cry of hear! hear! in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer joined*). If the right hon. Gentleman means to deny my assertion, I shall appeal to the recollection of the House whether in June last, when the army estimates were under discussion, I did not ask the right hon. Secretary at War (Mr. Bragge), after he had finished his statement—I did not ask if what he had mentioned comprehended all the provision that Ministers meant to make for the defence of the country. To this I was answered in the affirmative, and I accordingly gave notice of my intention to submit a measure founded on the same principle with that of the army of reserve. Any benefit that may have resulted from that measure is not, I assert, attributable to Ministers, who were quite at a loss what course to take—who knew not, in fact, what measures were applicable to the dangers of the country. I will not dwell on the execution of the army of reserve act, as I shall go into that subject very fully on Wednesday next, and if I should not then have the good fortune of persuading the House to accede to the proposition which I would wish to

have ingrafted on the army of reserve bill, in order to provide a constant and regular supply of recruits for our regular army, I shall feel an advantage in the existence of such a Committee as the motion before the House proposes to establish, as I may thus have an opportunity of again pressing the project upon the consideration of the House; a project which, if I am able to demonstrate its practicability for great objects in view, I am sure that every man will feel it to be desirable, and all will be ready to give it their concurrence. If I can shew that even a small increase can be derived from this project to our regular army, it is impossible to doubt that any member will refuse it his support. The mode proposed by Ministers to raise any addition to the regular army, to supply the suspension of the army of reserve, I confess I cannot understand. They have not stated any inducement to men to enlist for eight guineas bounty, and how they can procure them for such a sum, while thirty guineas and more are giving for militia substitutes, it is difficult to imagine; unless the intention be, that which no one has yet avowed, because all have been unanimous in condemning the practice, viz. that of raising men for rank. It may be said that this practice has prevailed when I was in power, but then the experience of that practice afforded a complete warning against it. I am quite ready to declare that I am sorry for the share I had in that measure, and experience convinces me, that it ought never again to be resorted to. Other gentlemen have appeared, and professed to be equally adverse to that measure, and their minds must be of a strange character, if what they have observed is not sufficient to dissuade them from it. Nothing can be more absurd than to suppose, that if they persist in the old and scandalous practice of crimping, all its attendant frauds and impositions will not return; and it is equally absurd to fancy, that only eight guineas bounty will be given. Why not let the army of reserve go on along with this new plan, whatever it may be? If officers are to run a race together for rank, as I understand they are—for although the intention is not avowed in this House by Ministers, applications are known to be made to and by several officers—why take away the competition of the army of reserve? I cannot conceive any thing more irrational. When a new mode of raising recruits for the regular army is proposed, it naturally brings to my mind an opinion which is much disputed, and upon which, because it is so disputed by some great military authorities, I cannot presume to pronounce

nounce a decided sentiment ; I mean the propriety of raising men for limited service, although I certainly should think it the more eligible policy, and best calculated to render the army respectable and efficient. However, military objections as to the difficulty, if such a system existed, of supplying our foreign stations, must be overcome before the system be attempted. As to the plan for bringing the Irish militia over here, I do not approve of it under existing circumstances. No argument can be drawn in favour of such a plan at present, from a precedent which occurred in quite a different situation of things. With respect to the interchange of the militias of the two countries, there are many physical objections to it that would render it a measure very disagreeable to the officers connected with both militias ; and here I must notice a rumour which has gone abroad, that applications have been lately made to the privates of the West Kent militia, without the knowledge of their officers, to volunteer their services for Ireland ; this practice deserves to be strongly reprobated. What, try to prevail on men to quit their own coast within half a day's sail of the enemy, to proceed to the distance of Ireland ! The hon. Mover of the proposition under debate has alluded in the course of his speech to the power which, in my opinion, belongs to the Crown, to call out the population of the country in the event of an invasion, as expressed in the preamble to the general defence act. I perceive that the hon. Gentleman's sentiments differ from mine. I do not mean to discuss this subject at present ; but I must observe, that nothing appears clearer to me than this proposition, that the state has a right to call on the people to defend it, and that in the Crown, being the depositary of the power of the state, is vested the right of so calling out the people upon a great emergency. This right I think I could shew, from a series of precedents, to be recognised by the constitution and custom of this country ; that it is a right inherent in the Crown to exercise this power according to the necessity of such case as may arise, and to be limited by that necessity. The Crown, it must be admitted, possesses the power of putting any district of the kingdom under martial law, in case of invasion ; subject, however, to that responsibility to which Ministers would be liable for the abuse of any such power.—The right hon. Gentleman then took a view of the proposition of the hon. Mover, respecting an armed peasantry. Of this measure he approved, but not universally. If it were adopted in some counties

counties on the coast, such as Kent, Suffex, Essex, Suffolk, Devonshire, part of Yorkshire, and other places, which might be considered in the proposed Committee, he thought it would be unnecessary to resort to it in the inland counties. It was remarkable, he observed, that no orders had yet been sent to the Lords Lieutenants of the different counties, to make out the classification or enrolment of the several males capable of bearing arms in their respective districts. This furnished another instance of the neglect of Ministers.—After recapitulating the different grounds of his objections to Ministers, the right hon. Gentleman took notice of the state of the navy, and observed that the very gun-brigs which he recommended on a former occasion were now building with all possible dispatch, although when he recommended them he was condemned to suffer some obloquy and even ridicule, which officers were brought from distant commands to assist in promoting. He proceeded to comment on the neglect of the fortifications so often pointed out as necessary on particular parts of the coast, when the expenditure of a few thousand pounds might prevent the employment and save the lives of many thousand men. In alluding to this neglect, he did not wish to be understood as at all saying anything of the Commander in Chief or the Master General of the Ordnance. He desired to speak only of the Cabinet. With them rested the responsibility—to them attached the duty of providing for every part of the public defence. In conclusion, the right hon. Gentleman stated that, judging of Ministers from what they had done and what they had omitted to do—from their slowness to adopt and their incapacity to act upon any vigorous plan for the public defence—from the very long consideration they required upon even the most trifling topics, and the very crude and ill-digested measures they, notwithstanding, uniformly brought forward; from all those considerations he felt himself urged by a strong sense of duty to the House, to his country, and to his Sovereign, to vote for the appointment of a Committee to consider of devising some effectual means for our protection, and for the security of all that a great nation could hold to be valuable. The opinion which he gave on this occasion he wished to be quite undisguised, and trusted that it was not likely to be considered as lightly taken up, but rather that the reasons he had stated were amply sufficient to sustain and justify it.

Mr. Secretary Yorke, after having paid the utmost attention to the able and brilliant speech of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr.

(Mr. Fox), did not think it necessary to follow him through all the variety of topics he thought proper to introduce, though he confessed them to be applicable to the subject, on the supposition that the Ministers were guilty of any culpable neglect: they came at present in the shape of imputations, and it would be time enough to answer them when they were alleged as direct charges. Neither would he now enter into an enlarged defence of the several bills adverted to incidentally, and which the House had approved, as it was in the power of any Gentleman to renew the discussion of them, by moving for their repeal. He was prepared to give his negative to the motion now proposed, for it was impossible for him to agree to it, without consenting to give up all the reports of engineers, all the information, and all the reports made to the different departments, and thereby affording the enemy all the information we are in possession of ourselves. That would be a strange step indeed at such a crisis as we are in at present. What was there to warrant such a proceeding as was now called for? Was there any suspicion or want of confidence in the Ministers at present rankling in the public mind? Was there any deficiency of execution on our parts, or any advantage obtained on the side of the enemy? Was there any discontent or dissatisfaction in the country? (*a violent cry of hear! hear! from the other side of the House.*) He knew, he said, that there was great dissatisfaction in some Gentlemen of that House, but he had heard none that had manifested itself in the nation. There was indeed some dissatisfaction expressed, last autumn, from the supposition in some parts of the country that their coasts were not sufficiently protected; but he could now say, with confidence, that there was not a district of the country which was not now better defended than Ireland was at the time when Hoche and his fleet lay off that coast for a fortnight, and that our volunteers were now in a higher state of discipline than the militia were, when the combined fleet, under d'Orvilliers, rode triumphant in the English Channel. The motion appeared to him a mere pretence. Why did not Gentlemen in a manly manner bring forward a motion for the dismissal of his Majesty's Ministers? The right hon. Gentleman under the gallery (Mr. Pitt) had indeed spoken out more openly, and explained in a more direct and candid manner what his intentions were. That Gentleman had pointed out what appeared to him to be the incongruities and defects of measures hastily brought

brought forward ; but he did not think it necessary to follow him minutely on every particular point. As to the volunteers, he had repeated on that subject, already so much discussed, the same opinions he had favoured the House with at different times before. All the criticism and indeed hypercriticism so often employed in judging of the conduct of his Majesty's Ministers, had that night been renewed. In answer to all those accusations, he would only ask the House to consider what had been done. At this moment the volunteer force was in a state of improvement which astonished not only all Europe, but the people of this country, who were surprised to find that system so rapidly and extensively established. According to the returns now made, most of the volunteer corps were armed, for it appeared that only about 18,000 were still without firelocks. In England and Scotland that force amounted at present to 330,000 men, and if to that number the volunteers in Ireland were added, the total would be more than 400,000 men in arms, independent of the regular army and the militia ; but if the regulars and militia were added, the whole military force of the country would be found to exceed 500,000 men. One great point of censure urged against his Majesty's Ministers was, that they had not taken measures for arming the peasantry ; and it seemed to be supposed that, from an inaccuracy in framing the defence bill, it became impossible for his Majesty, after its suspension, to enforce the compulsory clauses. He, however, did not admit that there was any such obstacle ; but contended, that in the particular situation of this country it was inexpedient. He could easily perceive the utility of an armed peasantry in the Black Forest, on the banks of the Neckar, in the defiles of the Tyrol, or other parts of the Continent, where not only the face of the territory, but the habits of the people were extremely different from those of this nation. In those countries the peasantry were inured to arms from their infancy ; but in this, there were many who did not know the butt end of a musket from its muzzle. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Fox) had argued much against the declaration of the prerogative contained in the general defence bill ; but it was astonishing that, entertaining such opinions, he should have remained silent when the bill was introduced. The hon. Gentleman then heard him state the grounds of that clause to which he now objected ; heard him quote precedents in support of the exercise of the prerogative, and yet suffered the bill to pass

pass through the House without making the smallest observation on the clause in question. He could not avoid also expressing his astonishment to learn the opinion which had been given on this subject by another high authority, especially when he recollected the person to whom he alluded had, in his official situation, once intended to enforce a similar principle with regard to his own county. With respect to the blame imputed to Ministers, for not preparing general rules for the volunteer corps, he reminded the House that it seemed, last session, to be a general opinion, that no rules ought to be, in the first instance, laid down for the volunteers, and that it was, by almost every one who spoke on the subject, thought to be more advisable to wait and see how the system would work, before any attempt was made to form permanent regulations. But instead of loose and indiscriminate censure, why did not Gentlemen before now submit to the House the plans they considered preferable to those brought forward by his Majesty's Ministers? At so late a period of the session, after the bill for consolidating and amending the various acts relative to the volunteer force had passed through both Houses of Parliament, and would probably soon receive the royal assent, it was very remarkable that so extraordinary a measure as going into a Committee of the whole House, to examine that and the other acts passed for the defence of the country, should be proposed. Gentlemen were fully justified in calling for accounts of the military force of the country; when they doubted the statements made by his Majesty's Ministers; but he did not suppose that any Gentleman would think it proper to call for the distribution of that force, the publication of which might prove pernicious to the general interests of the country. To the production, however, of an account, stating the general amount of our military force, there was no objection. The statement he had given of that force on a former occasion, would, he was convinced, be found, on comparison, to be correct.—Another ground of censure which the hon. Gentleman had stated was, that his Majesty's Ministers had deceived the country with respect to the continuance of peace, and reduced the military force to too low an establishment. This charge was no less unfounded than the others which had been brought forward. He could not now repeat the precise words he had used in moving the army estimates after the peace: but it must be recollected, he then stated, that in order to afford any chance of rendering the peace lasting, it would be necessary to maintain a very

large peace establishment. The diminution of the infantry which then took place, was in the smallest possible proportion; it consisted only of two regiments, which had been enlisted for a limited service, and the same principle for discharging as few as possible, was adhered to in reducing the militia. It was next added, why did not his Majesty's Ministers take measures to keep up the volunteer force during the peace? Surely it could not be forgotten that he had brought in a bill for that purpose after the peace. In point of fact, in consequence of that bill, nearly the whole of the yeomanry cavalry, amounting to about 10,000, and some of the best volunteer corps in towns, were maintained entire. With regard to the difficulty of recruiting the army at the recommencement of hostilities, that was not at all surprising, when it was considered how much the men who were disbanded at the end of the peace must have been fatigued by the continuance of the last war. The same difficulty was felt in recruiting for the marines. The right honourable Gentleman (Mr. Pitt) had described himself as the parent of the army of reserve, and other measures taken for the defence of the country. If that was the fact, he was ready to admit that these measures had come from a very illustrious source. Doubtless some ideas in the measures alluded to had been suggested by the hon. Gentleman; but with regard to the army of reserve act, he must state, that the plan of it came from a different quarter: it was first submitted to his Majesty's Ministers by a highly respectable general officer. The right hon. Gentleman had contended, that the suspension of the army of reserve act was an impolitic measure, and that was a question which the House would have other opportunities of discussing. All the reasoning of the right hon. Gentleman, however, tended to shew the necessity of rendering the army of reserve a permanent measure; but the question on Wednesday would not be, whether it should be permanent or not, but merely whether it should not experience a temporary suspension, in order to facilitate the raising a new levy of regular troops? When the subject came to be regularly discussed, he hoped he should be able to shew, that by suspending the operation of this act for twelve months, it would be easy to raise 18 or 20 battalions of regular infantry. But it was asked, how could any one expect to raise men at a bounty of 10*l.* for the army, when at present they got 30 and 50*l.* for the militia? All he could say on this point was, that the best informed military

tary officers were of opinion that men could be so raised for the army, provided the competition of the militia and army of reserve did not exist. The allowance, to be given, was ten guineas to each man, and two guineas to the recruiting officer, and the plan to be adopted was very different from that of recruiting for rank which had formerly prevailed, and which the right hon. Gentleman very properly blamed. It was proposed, according to the present plan, that only one step of rank should be obtained by recruiting. For raising a certain number of men, a major might become a lieutenant-colonel, a captain a major, or a lieutenant a captain, and a gentleman who raised a certain proportion might on that account acquire an ensigncy; but the most positive injunctions were to be issued, that no money above the bounty allowed by Government should be given for recruits. This order, rigorously enforced, would prevent an evil which had formerly prevailed to a great extent in recruiting. He lamented that it should have been supposed by the right hon. Gentleman, that a distinguished naval officer had intended to throw any ridicule on his opinions. The expression used by that officer was one very common among naval people, and was employed to shew their contempt of the enemy's force. When, therefore, the gun-boats were called a *Musquito fleet*, he would venture to assure the right hon. Gentleman that no ridicule of his opinions was meant. He subscribed to the opinion of the naval officer alluded to, that so long as the enemy had not more ships of the line than us, it was of little consequence whether they had less or more small craft. It seemed to be the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman that the enemy's boats were to be sent out unprotected to make their way to this coast, in the expectation that those which were not destroyed would be sufficiently numerous to effect the purpose on which they were sent. Might it not as well be supposed that it was the intention of the person who was collecting the gun-boats at Flushing and Boulogne, to follow a plan similar to those projected by Marshal Saxe and Tourville? Gun-boats might be very good to oppose a landing, or to harass the enemy on the passage, but the danger of the country would be great indeed, if its protection depended on a competition of boat to boat. He protested against the imputation thrown on the Admiralty by the right hon. Gentleman, in his observations on naval defence. The present Admiralty had done every thing in their power to probe the abuses of the naval department to the bottom. It was re-

markable, that during the Administration of Lord Temple and Lord Anson, there had been built in the King's dock-yards nearly seven ships of the line a year, the net average was six three quarters. In the succeeding years, however, the average number of ships built in the royal dock-yards never exceeded four in the year, and the principal part of our navy was built in the merchants' yards; would it not then be fit for the House to pause before they proceeded to censure the Admiralty on this account? With regard to the subject of fortifications, that presented a question of great difficulty. Formerly it was regarded as a subject not fit to be touched upon in that House; but he was glad to see that this opinion no longer existed. The sentiments of those best informed on the subject were not so much in favour of fortifications as many who had spoken in that House. Even Martello towers, which had been so strongly recommended, were considered by many eminent military characters as totally unfit for the defence of this coast. Having replied to the different points which had been urged against his Majesty's Ministers, he again recommended it to the hon. Gentlemen who had spoken, to bring forward a direct motion against his Majesty's Ministers, if they really thought it their duty so to do, and not to aim at their dismissal by a sort of side-wind measure, like that which they had now resorted to.

Mr. George Vanfiliart thought, if objections were made to the general conduct of his Majesty's Ministers, the regular way would be to address the Sovereign on their incompetence.

Sir William Pulteney was of opinion there was no ground to justify the motion before the House, because on all those points where an attempt had been made to throw blame on his Majesty's Ministers, it appeared to him they had done right. They were, however, but men, and must not be expected to be perfect. To human nature allowance must be made for some faults, from which they could not be wholly free any more than their predecessors, in whose conduct there were many faults, and gross ones too, which he could easily point out. When the present Ministers came into office, the country was engaged in prosecuting a long, arduous, expensive, and unpopular war, which had been so long carried on by their predecessors, and with such enormous expence, that the right hon. Gentleman who had that night joined so heartily in the censure of Ministers, could not have carried it on for three months longer. He must have been forced from
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his situation, by the spirit and sense of the country, had he longer persisted in it; and he had no difficulty in asserting that he could not have made peace with an enemy implacable against his administration. In that critical and arduous moment, his Majesty's present Ministers came forward and concluded a peace, so welcome to the wishes of the people. But if, unhappily, those Ministers had since found that the revival of the war was unavoidable, was there a man within or without those walls, was there a power in Europe who was not convinced that the fault lay solely in the restless ambition and insulting aggressions of the enemy, and was by no means justly attributable to his Majesty's Ministers, for whose conduct on that occasion the country owed them indelible obligations? for by that conduct they manifested their sincerity in the wish of peace, and their readiness to make every concession, not dishonourable to the country, for its maintenance; and by that means, under the dire and inevitable necessity of renewing the war, they justified themselves in the eyes of their country and of all Europe; and excited that unanimous and glorious spirit, in which the nation stood ready to vindicate its honour and security, and to hurl defiance to the foe. (*Hear! hear! hear!*) When war was found inevitable, they adopted with the utmost promptitude, the measures best calculated to call forth the military strength of the country.

Sir H. Popham held in his hand a printed paper, laid on the table of the House, relative to the navy, in which, he said, different inaccuracies were to be found. The number of vessels in service were rated at 1874; on calculating them up, however, he saw that they only amounted to 1652, being an error to the amount of 222. The number of seamen, marines, &c. was taken from the returns on the 30th of November, amounting to 77,894, and no deduction was made for deaths, desertions, &c. between that time and the 15th March, when the list was made up. Were the returns from the different fleets, &c. laid on the table, the House would see that this was not a correct statement.

Captain Markham considered the first inaccuracy alluded to by the hon. Officer as merely an error in calculation. As to the other, so far from being an exaggerated statement of the number of seamen and marines, it was very much underrated, as it contained none of the returns of impressed men, or of those who had entered since the 30th of November. With respect to desertion, that was a very uncommon circumstance, and the hospitals were in so complete a state that

that not a tenth part so many men died as during the last war. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Pitt) had laid great stress on the preparations on the other side the Channel, and seemed to think that the flotilla at Boulogne ought to be met by a similar flotilla. This, however, was an erroneous opinion. The best mode of opposing them was by larger ships, which would be like men opposing boys. It was impossible to prevent the enemy's boats coming along shore, and our smaller vessels could not keep their position on the enemy's coast. The hon. Captain vindicated Sir Edward Pellew from any wish to ridicule Mr. Pitt, which he could assure the right hon. Gentleman would be far from the intention of his gallant Friend. He also asserted the propriety of the conduct of the Admiralty in every particular.

The *Attorney General*—Sir, I beg to express my humble reliance that the House will indulge me with their attention to a few observations on the subject now before them, and in vindication of his Majesty's Ministers, whose dismissal from their situations is the avowed object of the motion this night brought forward by the hon. Gentleman over against me (Mr. Fox); and I should not feel that I had done my duty to my King and Country, if I should omit to express my astonishment at the manner in which the question has been opened by that hon. Gentleman. If the question be carried this night in favour of that motion, and especially upon the arguments of the right hon. Gentleman under the gallery (Mr. Pitt), there can be no question of its being followed by the resignation of the Ministry, who can no longer consent to retain their situations under so obvious a declaration, that they have lost the confidence of the House of Commons. But I would ask the hon. Gentleman, if this is the species of conduct I am to expect from his candour and liberality? Is it on a motion of this sort, containing no direct charge of any criminal act or omission on the part of his Majesty's Ministers, that I am to expect a decision, in which is insidiously involved the question, whether or not they shall any longer retain the confidence of this House, or continue to fill those situations in which they have acted with so much zeal and integrity, and I will add, with such signal effect for the service and security of their King and Country? Is this a species of conduct consistent with the candour and manliness of his character, or the dignity which I have on so many occasions admired, though on so many others I have had reason to censure? Could I have expected from him, to chuse such a mode or such a subject, to collect

collect every stray vote and every stray opinion, to impress with his purpose the minds of many Gentlemen, brought together from the most distant parts of the country with no trivial share of management and industry? (*A cry of hear! hear!*) Sir, I repeat it—Gentlemen brought hither, with the utmost industry, from every quarter of the kingdom, to hear the attack this night upon his Majesty's Ministers, preparatory to their fall under a subsequent measure, namely, an address to his Majesty for their dismissal? Of this, it is obvious, the motion before the House is the forerunner; but if this House shall agree to a motion brought forward in such a manner, I have no hesitation in declaring it will sanction a project the most to be deplored, under existing circumstances, that ever was adopted by a House of Parliament. With regard to the principle of the prerogative vested in the Crown, for calling on the services of the body of the people for the defence of the country, the hon. Gentleman has endeavoured to throw some doubts on the existence of that prerogative. In support of his reasoning, he adduced some passages from Judge Foster—certainly I will allow his authority upon any legal subject: and he concludes, that if this prerogative does exist, it is only in the sanction of modern usage, and in cases of actual invasion. Now, Sir, I would beg to ask, if it exists only in cases of invasion, what is the occurrence in modern usage in this country by which only it is sanctioned? for certainly the instances of modern invasion of this realm, afford no opportunity for instances of its exercise; and the practice has obtained principally, if not entirely, on ancient usage. For my own part, I have no doubt of the existence of the prerogative in the Crown; and it must appear to every man of ordinary perception, that in cases of invasion, when the power of the magistrate and of the law courts is for a time suspended, the prerogative of the Crown is all in all for the well-being of the realm. With respect to the motion before the House, if it is meant to precede an address to his Majesty for the dismissal of his present Ministers, it is necessary at least to consider on what grounds, of what those Ministers have done or left undone, so marked a measure of censure is called for; and it will behove the wisdom and justice of this House, before they consent to affix their hand to such a measure, to consider well how it can be justified, and to look a little further and consider what are the consequences likely to result from the councils of men such as those who are likely to become the successors of the present Administration. An hon. Gentleman,

man, who has this night taken occasion to censure his Majesty's Ministers for the peace they had concluded, seems to forget his own declaration on the subject of that peace, upon a former occasion. He then gave it his approbation, and said, that, considering the state of the world, and the situation in which this country stood, it was the best that could be obtained, and he hailed it as such; while another right hon. Gentleman, whom I will call his new ally on the present occasion, deprecated the peace, and condemned it as a most mischievous and ruinous measure. These difficulties I shall leave for those great statesmen to settle at the next cabinet they hold; but putting the authority of the one against the other, I will ask, what sort of congruity the country can expect from a junction of both? For the peace which was concluded, every British heart acknowledged gratitude to his Majesty's present Ministers; and to them is entirely owing the unanimity of the whole empire in support of the present war—an unanimity worth all the soldiers that were disbanded at the conclusion of the peace. But the hon. Gentleman allows no excuse to his Majesty's Ministers for recommencing an unavoidable war; but charges them with involving the country in danger. I should be glad, Sir, if his talents had been always roused to action by a sense of his country's danger. I should rejoice, Sir, to remember, that his vigilance and his energies had always been excited by a sense of the danger of that country for which he now professes so much alarm and solicitude. But, Sir, when public danger threatened this country on a former and no very remote occasion, how did the hon. Member manifest his solicitude? Was it by deserting his duty in this House? (*Hear! hear!*) When the annihilation of the naval power of the country was menaced by the mutiny, where was the hon. Gentleman? Not at any place where his duty should have pressed him. (*Hear! hear!*) So much for the hon. Gentleman's zeal, and his alarm at the public danger. I have no charge to make against his consistency in supporting the peace, because, during the whole of the war, he was ready to make peace upon almost any terms: and therefore I might suppose he would be as ready on the same principle to support peace again. But how will he reconcile this principle to the right hon. Gentleman who goes along with him in this measure, and who has repeatedly declared that peace to have so sunk the spirit of the country, and the hearts of Englishmen, that they have not courage to raise their hands against France? I know

know how much the arrogance and acerbity with which that peace was condemned, and the character and courage of the country traduced, may have contributed to excite the enemy to new designs of hostility against us; but certainly, if Bonaparte felt any disposition to insult and attack this country, I know of nothing so well calculated to induce him to believe he might do it with impunity, as the language held on that occasion by the right hon. Gentleman. But now that this fallen, dispirited, and pusillanimous nation, is again disposed to assert itself, and shew its spirit against the common enemy, his Majesty's Ministers are attacked for renewing the war, and condemned through every vestige of their proceedings in conducting it. Sir, I say it would be an act of the utmost rashness in this House, at such a crisis as the present, to move for the dismissal of his Majesty's Ministers, or agree to any motion, necessarily leading to such a measure, without well considering what would be likely to follow, and who to succeed them—to consider a little the disposition of those successors; and if we only examine a little the consistency of their principles and politics, we shall find but little cause to rely on the success of their measures.—Here the right hon. Gentleman proceeded to recapitulate several of the statements of the public force, in vindication of the vigilance and activity of Ministers, which he argued were never surpassed by any Ministers of this country, at any period of our history; and added, that their exertions in the course of the last year, amounted, *prima facie*, to a conclusion in their favour, having within that period raised the public strength to the utmost pitch of which it was capable in so short a time.—We are told, continued the right hon. Gentleman, that our country is in a state of siege; and how does it appear?—why, in our fleets blockading the ports of the enemy! It is said, that we are degraded in the eyes of all Europe! I should be glad to know the name of that nation, which, among the surrounding countries of humiliated Europe, can, from its proud and elevated dignity, look down upon the present humble, prostrate state of degraded England!—If, indeed, the powers of the Continent felt that England, crouching with terror within her own ports, felt alarm only for her own safety, they might feel sentiments of contempt for her situation; but viewing her as the only nation able to cope with the gigantic power and ambition of France, which has humbled all the rest of Europe, and the only rallying point to which Europe can turn for the hopes of its emancipation; I am at a loss to conceive

ceive what is meant by this degradation. I recollect, indeed, the vaunts of the enemy; the threats of our annihilation; the *Delenda est Carthago*; the assertion that France and England could not both exist in the same hemisphere; and the menaces of Bonaparte of our utter destruction: but we have seen him afterwards crouch to a peace with this country, and to purchase that peace by surrendering the territories of his allies; and how does he now menace our destruction? Why, by fleets that dare not quit his shores beyond the protection of those batteries that line his coast from Dunkirk to Boulogne. From an union, such as the motion of this night proposes to effect, in succession to his Majesty's present Ministers, no unity of sentiment can be expected. In a cabinet composed of such opposite principles, indeed, no union can exist. I think it extremely probable, for instance, that one of the first measures that would be proposed by the right hon. Gentleman opposite to me (Mr. Fox) would be a peace with Bonaparte, and probably through the mediation of Russia. But, I ask, is it to be expected such a peace would be proposed in such terms as his right hon. ally would be induced to agree to? I know there are many Gentlemen in this House to-night, who may be induced to vote in favour of this question, even with a view to the removal of his Majesty's present Ministers, in hope that it might lead to form a ministry, at the head of which might be placed the right hon. Gentleman under the gallery. I know his great talents and his exalted mind; and I know that great good must be attained for this country, under any government where he is placed at the head. But does any man imagine it possible he could ever unite with the hon. Gentleman opposite to me, who has so often arraigned his government, as an abomination to this country; and the whole of his measures as the most wicked, dangerous, and unconstitutional? who has arraigned him repeatedly as guilty of the vilest corruption and profligacy; and accused him of wickedly and unnecessarily protracting the late war, and promoting the ruin of his country? Can it be possible that the hon. Member over against me (Mr. Fox), now just returning to this House from that retirement he sought, in disgust, at the measures of the right hon. Gentleman under the gallery, will dedicate his first exertion to raise again to power that Minister whose former sway he considered so odious, and his ministry the greatest calamity to this country? Sir, I cannot suppose such an object possible. It may be imagined, that the right hon.

Gentleman

Gentleman under the gallery is desirous of raising to power the hon. Member over the way: this I think equally improbable. I do not say the disgrace would be greater to one than to the other; but that it would be equally disgraceful to both. I am ready to give the right hon. Gentleman under the gallery credit for every thing magnanimous, for every thing liberal, for every readiness to sacrifice political resentment or party pique, when at such a crisis they may stand in the way of his country's good; and I am sure he would feel it a load cast from his feelings. But I do not believe that he can sacrifice the great principle of his consistency; and I can never think that two men of principles so totally opposite, could meet at the same council board, without such concealments or dissimulation as would render each despicable in the eyes of the other, and both in their own. I beg to ask, if this could be considered as a means of defending the nation; if it could be for the good of the country, that Administration should continue in their situations after the confidence of Parliament was withdrawn from them? And if they are to continue in place, would it not be madness for the House to accede to this measure? I beg to ask, is this a time to repeal the habeas corpus suspension law in Ireland, or the martial law bill? Is it, I ask, a prudent moment to agitate the Catholic question? Is it a time to assimilate this homely constitution of ours to that "exalted monument of human wisdom"—the Government of France? (*Hear! hear!*) The hon. Gentlemen who join in the purpose of the motion may vote for it, but it will become the wisdom of the House to pause before they adopt it, I would conjure even the hon. Gentleman himself, by the many well-fought days of argument he has maintained in this House; I conjure him by the memory of his departed friend Mr. Burke—I would conjure him by a memory he should, and he ought to respect more—the memory of his departed self—to stop before his too late, and before he signs and seals for ever his own inconsistency. A Government, at the head of which should be placed a man, the enthusiastic admirer of French principles—(*Order! order!*) Sir, I believe I am not out of order, and if Gentlemen wish to put an end to the consistency and congruity of Government, I am not to blame for endeavouring to rescue the House from delusion.

Mr. Windham had heard nothing from the other side of the House that was either instructive or entertaining. The learned Gentleman, however, had determined to break the

dullness that seemed to overspread the House, and had chaunted the funeral obsequies of the Ministry in melodious strains.

"He sang Darius, great and good,

"Fallen, fallen, fallen, fallen,

"Fallen from his high estate,

"And weltering in his blood."

But he did not seem to think the cause altogether desperate; and as he proceeded,

"He burst the bands of sleep asunder,

"And rous'd him like a peal of thunder."

The hon. Member then proceeded to notice the arguments of the Secretary of State, and the Attorney General, and remarking on the latter, observed, that he ought to have shewn more feeling and regard to those with whom he was connected. He ought to have thought of a Gentleman, not more than four or five from him, and on the same bench, when he undertook to abuse coalitions, and attack men for union on any particular measures. The learned Gentleman had been very lavish of his advice to all sides of the House, and had cautioned them against taking any part in a Ministry in which he and his friends were not interested. He had stated, that the question went to decide whether the present Administration was to continue in power. He hoped it did affect that question, as that was a matter of very great importance. The learned Gentleman had the credit of standing forth the champion of Administration, and certainly, as their advocate he was peculiarly well qualified, though, on the present occasion, he seemed to have become both advocate and client. He had no intention of going into the notion of a coalition, dwelt upon at so great length, and with so much warmth, by the learned Gentleman, who laid down for others principles which it appeared he could not make apply to the conduct of those who were sitting so very near him.

Mr. Tierney did not imagine he was of so much consequence as to be so often arraigned. With respect to what had been said, as to his inconsistency, it was for the event to shew how, on the subject of parliamentary reform, he should act. For the present let that be left *ad referendum*. As to accusations of entertaining French principles, he should take that as he always took it, in no ill humour. He had opposed his Majesty's late Ministers, and certainly for one strong reason among others, that the right hon. Gentleman opposite was a Minister in a military department. The present

sent question was evidently one, on the confidence that ought to be reposed in Administration. The ground stated for the motion was the defence of the country; but the latter part of the motion went to take away from the Executive Government, what had been always entrusted to it. It was nothing else but the question of dismissing Ministers, which ought to have been brought forward in a fair, manly manner. He might be accused of self-interest, but he knew he had not been actuated by any such motive. It was said, that Administration acted on no system, and this by those who were a part of the last; of that Administration which formed the provisional cavalry, and whose income tax was the subject of complaints without end. Ministers had been abused for listening to the suggestions of others; such was the return for their impartiality. But any candid man, who looked at the multiplicity of affairs that crowded upon them, would see that their fault was rather in attempting too much. Look at Ireland, and see what a small force there was last war to defend it, compared with what there is at present; yet from the same mouth that ordered the then Irish establishment, the House now heard the voice of complaint. The right hon. Gentleman under the gallery had sufficiently shewn the excellence of the volunteer system on different occasions. The zeal of the people at large had certainly been great; but Ministers had done every thing in their power to promote and direct it; and the volunteers in general had shewn an excellent disposition. They were not equal to regular troops on a military system; but he did not think that the united talents of the different coalescing parties, could point out a better mode of assisting the public defence. If party had raged abroad, as much as in that House, they never could have been formed. If they were used properly, they would do their duty. With all the conquests and power of France, all that she has been able to do since the last peace, and all the additional means afforded her, we were now actually preparing, not for defence, but for offensive measures against her. The country was therefore as well defended as if even the late Secretary at War had the care of defending it. He had a great respect for the abilities of that right hon. Gentleman; but he really believed that his return to the management of military affairs would strike more dismay than the appointment of any other man in the country; so many things would immediately occur to disgust the public mind. He might get a disposable force, and he believed too, he would, as formerly, soon find out a way of disposing of it. The present

sent negligent and incapable Ministry, as it was called, had scarcely done any thing like the transactions of St. Domingo, or the invasion of Holland, for which men were enticed and sent off intoxicated, and not knowing to what regiment they belonged, to have their brains beat out. But on this question the hon. Gentleman ought to be able to state what his expectations were with respect to the successors of the present Administration. He had heard a good deal of a coalition; that it actually had taken place, he could not say; but he had also heard of a co-operation. Three large bodies had, it seemed, agreed in nothing else, but in their efforts to get rid of the present Ministry. To accomplish such an union, many things must have been given up, and probably the right hon. Gentleman had made his peace with the hon. Mover, for the attack made on the unblemished character of the hon. Gentleman, while the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Windham) was in office, by striking him out of his Majesty's Privy Council! If Gentlemen suffered such a motion as this to be carried, what would they say to the country, after the various acts they had passed, and the measures they had taken? It was necessary to look at the remedy proposed, as well as the disorder. The leaders of the combined parties had many partisans undoubtedly; but he was perfectly confident, that if they succeeded there would be a general feeling of regret in the public mind whenever the present Administration should retire. The feelings of the public were, he was certain, with the present Ministers. After ten years experience, the public had felt the blessing of being deprived of the vigorous proceedings of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Windham). But where were the petitions against Ministers? from what city, or county, or borough? Some Gentlemen, in opposition, had a pretty good notion of the mode of procuring them; but they did not appear. Perhaps he might hear of them by and bye. There might be some meetings in Palace-yard for that purpose, and very probably in the borough of Southwark too; but at present Gentlemen knew, that to procure any thing of importance in this way was impracticable. He was perfectly satisfied with the conduct of Ministers, and he should always look back to his connexion with them with satisfaction.

Col. Hutchinson was in favour of the motion.

Mr. Fox, in reply, observed, that no debate that he recollected to have originated, seemed more to justify a reply on his part. So much personality, and so little to the subject, he had never heard. The debate had, indeed, taken
a sin-

a singular turn. If ever any discussion in that House had been maintained on the principles of party, or rather of faction (with the exception of the Secretary of State), it was the present: at the same time there was a total want of capacity in reference to the subject, which was treated in a manner that deserved no better name than mere rimbaldry. He had been used formerly to debates something like this: and if he had any ambition for office, he should be inclined to construe it into a favourable omen, as he always observed that when Ministers had appeared in danger of losing their places, their abuse of him was increased proportionably, and every old topic, every supposed political sin of his was called up to their assistance. So to night, there was the peace, and the coalition, and he expected to hear of the Middlesex election. But when the Gentleman touched on the coalition, a subject of so many years old, he would recommend him to go to the present President of the Council, or to a noble Lord, now a Postmaster General, supposed to have been active in that coalition, and ask them about the circumstances of it. The learned Gentleman had amused himself with general declamation against all coalitions, whenever they did not suit his own purposes or those of his friends: but why, when certain Gentlemen unfortunately differed from him in the last war, and the Duke of Portland and others, one noble Person particularly (Lord Fitzwilliam) joined the late Administration; why did not that coalition appear enormous in the eyes of the learned Gentleman? Where was his indignation then? Were they not as deep in guilt as himself? He would refer to his own language on the occasion of his first coalition; he would refer to his language on the occasion of his separation from his former friends, since that event, for the record of his sentiments. Of that last event, had he never spoken but as one he lamented for an unfortunate, though honourable difference of opinion on an important subject. But it seemed that no argument must be allowed that tended to disturb Administration. He had been accused of admiring French principles: he believed, that in the joy he expressed at the downfall of the old French government, he was joined by most persons, nay, perhaps, by Government itself; but was he, on that account, to be made a party to all the horrors afterwards committed? But he could see the disappointment of the learned Gentleman, who had come down to the House, prepared with a very furious speech against him, and had begun by attacking the right hon. Gentleman on

on the bench below him very sharply; then had assailed him most violently, and last of all, had made a moderate and gentle-thrust at the right hon. Gentleman under the gallery. All the terrors had been originally intended for himself, but being disappointed in his not making an attack on the right hon. Gentleman under the gallery, the learned Member had abused him, for being so unmanly as not to attack Mr. Pitt!—He thinks the right hon. Gentleman below, not very likely to come into place and power; he thinks I have no chance at all, and therefore he may abuse me; but he thinks the right hon. Gentleman behind has a good prospect in case of a change; and he tells him that he thinks him the person the most satisfactory to the public for the management of public affairs, and so he says his colleagues think! He therefore turns round and makes his bow to that right hon. Gentleman. When he speaks of colleagues, I suppose, from this specimen of his prudence, that he means both his present and his future ones.—In answer to the question put, “Who is to succeed the present Ministers?” he observed, that he did not oppose the royal prerogative, but maintained the dignity of Parliament. He was for turning out the present Ministry, which was formed on a wrong principle. He thought them a curse to the country. If they were not succeeded by men who did better, he should oppose them too.—Now, as to this word coalition, the Gentleman knows as much of the matter as I do. I should, however, suppose, there was nothing so monstrous in persons who have differed very widely on topics now no more, not possessing rancorous dispositions, and having held formerly sentiments of private regard, and been in habits of intimacy, uniting in their sentiments on any particular measures. I know nothing of this coalition, as it is called, that might not be proclaimed at Charing-Cross.—“Oh! but,” says the learned Gentleman, “you’ll differ and quarrel about peace!” What right has he to resort to this mode of argument to support him and his faction in power? Is the argument of Gentlemen against Ministers any rule for their conduct as to war and peace? “Oh! but,” says he again, “you differed about the treaty of Amiens!” Truly, Sir, we did differ; and if that treaty had tended to secure us the peace held out by it, I should have praised it, as the learned Gentleman has done. I say, the foundation of the agreement is, that the country is in danger. Those who thought with me, in the late war, never conceived the country in such danger.

danger as it is at present. But they who oppose Ministers may be eager to defend the country. So it was in the American war. The hon. Gentleman concluded by saying, that he asked for no votes but from those who thought something more should be done for defending the country.

The House then divided :

Ayes	-	204
Noes	-	256

Majority for Ministers - 52

Adjourned at four o'clock in the morning.

List of the above Minority.

Anson, Thomas	Canning, right hon. George
Antonic, W. Lee	Cartwright, W. R.
Adair, Robert	Cooper, J. E.
Adams, W.	Caulfield, hon. H.
Aubrey, Sir John	Craufurd, Col.
Bailey, George	Chapman, C.
Banks, Henry	Codrington, C.
Binning, Lord	Calcraft, John
Bertie, General	Cavendish, Lord G.
Barclay, George	Cavendish, W.
Barham, J. Foster	Carbery, Lord
Bruce, P. C.	Coke, Thomas W.
Bootle, E. W.	Coke, Edward
Barne, Snowdon	Combe, H. C.
Brandling, C. J.	Dalrymple, Sir H.
Beach, M. Hicks	Dickenson, W. sen.
Brodie, J.	Dickenson, W. jun.
Brooke, Lord	Dupré, J.
Byng, George	Dundas, hon. R.
Burdett, Sir F.	Dundas, right hon. W.
Blaquiere, Lord De	Dundas, C.
Bouverie, hon. E.	Dundas, L.
Bradshaw, R. H.	Dundas, G.
Bligh, Thomas	Dundas, Philip
Berkeley, Admiral	Dent, John
Burroughs, Wm.	Dillon, hon. H. A.
Barclay, Sir Robert	Durand, J. H.
Bourne, Sturges	Elford, Sir Wm.
Cooke, Bryan	Ellis, C. R.
Creevey, Thomas	Euston, Earl of
Courtenay, John	Eliot, hon. W.

Eliot, W.
 Everett, T.
 Ferguson, James
 Fitzharris, Lord
 Foster, John
 Fuller, John
 Fox, hon. C. J.
 Foljambe, F. P.
 Francis, Philip
 Fitzpatrick, General
 Fitzhugh, Wm.
 Folkestone, Viscount
 Foley, Andrew
 Graham, Col.
 Graham, James
 Geary, Sir W.
 Gregor, Francis
 Gunning, G. W.
 Garland, G.
 Gower, Lord G. L.
 Grenville, right hon. T.
 Grenfell, P.
 Hammet, John
 Hill, Wm.
 Hamilton, Lord A.
 Henderson, A.
 Hippisley, Sir John C.
 Holland, H.
 Hardman, E.
 Harrison, John
 Hulkes, J.
 Hope, Alex.
 Hutchinson, hon C.
 Hughes, W. L.
 Jeffery, J.
 Jolliffe, Hylton
 Jekyll, Joseph
 Johnstone, George
 Johnes, T.
 Kinnaird, hon. C.
 Kensington, Lord
 Kirkwall, Viscount
 Leigh, R. H.
 Lenox, Charles

Long, right hon. C.
 Latouche, P.
 Latouche, J.
 Lovaine, Lord
 Lowther, Col.
 Lowther, J.
 Langton, Gore
 Laurence, Dr.
 Lawley, Sir R.
 Lamb, T. D.
 Lambton, R. John
 Ladbroke, R.
 Leland General
 Milbank, Sir R.
 Mostyn, Sir T.
 Marsham, Viscount
 Mildmay, Sir H.
 Morpeth, Lord
 Madocks, W. A.
 Milner, Sir W.
 Morland, W.
 Mackenzie, Gen. A.
 Manners, John
 Morris, Edward
 Montgomery, J.
 Moore, Peter
 Moorg, G. P.
 Newport, Sir John
 North, Dudley
 Northey, Wm.
 Osborne, Lord F.
 Osborne, John
 Offulston, Lord
 Ord, William
 Pelham, hon. C.
 Popham, Sir Home
 Poyntz, W. S.
 Peel, Sir R.
 Penn, J.
 Petty, Lord H.
 Peirse, Henry
 Pitt, right hon. W.
 Porchester, Lord
 Preston, Sir R.

Phipps,

Phipps, J. G.
 Plumer, Wm.
 Pytches, John
 Ram, A.
 Ryder, hon. R.
 Russell, Lord William
 Raine, J.
 Rooke, General
 Rose, right hon. G.
 Rose, George H.
 Rutherford, G.
 Scott, Claude
 Scott, S.
 Scott, Joseph
 Sinclair, Sir John
 Sloane, H.
 Sheridan, R. B.
 Sneyd, N.
 Shakespeare, Arthur
 Smith, Samuel
 Smith, C.
 Smith, John
 Scudamore, John
 Smith, William
 Spencer, Lord R.
 St. John, hon. St. A.
 Stanhope, S.

Smith, Ashton
 Somerset, Lord E.
 Staniforth, John
 Stanley, Lord
 Stuart, Lord W.
 Thornton, S.
 Thornton, Robert
 Turner, E.
 Thelluffon, I. P.
 Tarleton, General
 Townshend, Lord J.
 Villiers, hon. J. C.
 Ward, Robert
 Ward, hon. J. W.
 Wilberforce, Wm.
 White, M.
 Walpole, hon. G.
 Windham, right hon. W.
 Wynne, Sir W. W.
 Wynne, C. W.
 Wrottesley, Sir J.
 Wigram, R.
 Western, C. C.
 Wharton, John
 Winnington, Sir E.
 Wood, George
 Young, Sir Wm.

Lord Temple, }
 S. Whitbread, } Tellers.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

TUESDAY, APRIL 24.

The Marquis of Stafford moved, that his notice of a motion relating to the defence of the country, which stood for Friday, should be discharged, and that the same should be postponed to Monday, for which day he moved that the Lords should be summoned. Ordered.

IRISH MILITIA.

Lord Hawkesbury moved, that the Irish militia transfer bill be read a third time.

The Lord Chancellor stated the opinions which he had given

on a former occasion, with respect to some particular objections that had been urged against that part of the bill which it was contended would subject the Irish militia to the penalties and disqualifications imposed by the statute of the 25th Charles II. He had given the subject much consideration since it was last discussed, and the impression upon his mind was, that Roman Catholic officers or soldiers of the Irish militia, who should come into this country under the operation of the present act, would come into it with all the privileges and immunities attached to them, that they possessed in consequence of the act of the 33d of the King. Such, upon mature deliberation, was his opinion, and such he could assert to be the opinion of another noble and learned Lord, whom he did not then see in his place.

The *Duke of Norfolk* asked whether Roman Catholics admitted into the Irish militia in this country, would be exempt from the disabilities of the act of the 25th of Charles II.

The *Lord Chancellor* gave it as his opinion that they would be exempt.

Earl Spencer did not feel himself competent to argue the question with the professional ability of the noble and learned Lords, but it certainly, in the little judgment that he, a plain unlearned man, could form on the subject, appeared extremely necessary to him, as doubts had been entertained on the subject, that a positive declaration and precise enactment should set them to rest.

The *Lord Chancellor* stated, that one of the greatest inconveniencies professional men, who were called upon to pronounce judicial decisions, laboured under, arose from the confusion that was produced by overloading acts of parliament with unnecessary clauses. Of that description he conceived the clause to be that it was proposed to introduce; and therefore he would feel it his duty to oppose it.

Lord Ellenborough corroborated the opinion of the noble and learned Lord on the woolpack, as to the exemption of Roman Catholic officers or privates of the militia from the operation of the last act.

Lord Grenville had every respect for, and was disposed to receive with all the deference that was due to them, the opinions of professional members of that House, on professional questions. But this was a subject of rather a legislative than a judicial character, and, therefore, he was excusable in differing from the noble and learned Lords who had favoured the House with their opinions on the question. If, indeed, the question had been decided in another place, by the noble and

and learned Lord who presided in the Court of King's Bench, there his authority was recognized, and his opinion would be submitted to with that general approbation that his great learning and professional talents entitled him to expect. But here, he spoke it with all due respect, the noble Lord could only be considered as a peer of parliament, and his opinion was not entitled to more respect than that of any other peer, except as it should be supported by superior argument. He did not agree with the noble and learned Lord, that the clause was unnecessary. Doubts had been excited in the breasts of his Majesty's Catholic subjects, officers of militia, and, therefore, he deemed it extremely important that they should be quieted. To effect that he had taken the trouble of preparing a clause which he would take the liberty of offering to the House, the purport of which was, that persons professing the Roman Catholic religion, and others serving as officers, non-commissioned officers, or privates, in the militia of Ireland, should not be subject to any disabilities or penalties in this country that they were exempt from in Ireland.

Lord Carleton supported the arguments of the two noble and learned Lords, and the opinions which they grounded on them.

Lord Grenville professed himself not satisfied with the extra judicial decisions that had been given on this point, and wished that the determination respecting it should rest on more solid and certain grounds, than opinions thrown out loosely and occasionally in the course of debate. He wished for a special provision that would apply particularly to the question.

The *Bishop of St. Asaph* was inclined to pay the utmost deference to the opinion of the noble and learned Lords; but he thought it his duty, as the person who had first moved the question, to support the clause proposed by the noble Baron, the effect of which, he had every reason to suppose, would completely satisfy the minds of the Roman Catholics serving in the militia.

Lord Hawkesbury and the Marquis of Sligo opposed the clause, which was supported by Lord Mulgrave, in reply to whom

Lord Ellenborough rose again, and gave it as his decided opinion, that no Roman Catholic officer who had been admitted into the Irish militia in that country, and who should come here in consequence of the bill before the House, would be subject to the operation of the 25th of Charles, and for this good reason, that it would not be possible to frame such an information against such officer on that statute, as could bring him

him within the spirit or letter of that act, which required six months previous residence, before he could be subject to the provisions of it.

On Lord Grenville's amendment the House divided, Contents 45, Non Contents 71, Majority against the amendment 26.

On the motion for the passing of the bill,

Earl Mulgrave declared his disapprobation of the measure and of the conduct of Ministers in general, for whom, though he individually professed a sincere regard, and though he considered them men of integrity and respectability, he declared that he did not think them adequate to the management of public affairs. So much did he think ability requisite at the present moment, that, were he forced to the choice, he was free to declare that he would prefer greater ability with less integrity than the present Ministers possessed. This, however, there was no occasion for adopting. This country was not destitute of men who, to the most consummate ability, joined the highest integrity.

Earl Carnarvon also opposed the bill; which was supported by the *Earl of Westmoreland*; when the House again divided on the question that the bill do pass, Contents 91, Non-Contents 49, Majority for passing of the bill 42.

The third reading of the Irish militia augmentation bill was then moved for.

Lord King opposed the bill, as a measure that would prove wholly inefficient for creating any great accession to the public force. His Lordship condemned the policy observed by his Majesty's Government towards the people of Ireland, and severely reproved the indiscretion of a noble and learned Lord residing in that country, in having, in his correspondence with a noble Lord of a different religious persuasion from his own, circulated sentiments and opinions tending to uphold the lamentable abuses which had so long prevailed in that country, in which he was sorry to say there appeared a disposition, on the part of the wealthy, to oppress and abuse those who were actually entitled to their protection.

The *Earl of Limerick* condemned, in spirited language, the observations of the noble Baron, and maintained that there was no disposition, on the part of any of the opulent classes in his country, to oppress any of their fellow countrymen.

Lord Ellenborough would not have said a word on the present subject, had it not been for the reflections which had fallen from a noble Lord opposite to him, against another noble Lord,

Lord, a member of that House. He thought, indeed, that the age of chivalry was gone; the nice discriminations and feelings of honour were likewise gone, when comments were to be made in that House on a correspondence obtained in the way in which the one alluded to had come before the public. He was far from supposing that the noble Lord to whom the letters were addressed had any hand in their publication: Had the two noble Lords by whom they were written, and to whom they were addressed, concurred in prosecuting the purloiner of them, his Lordship entertained no doubt that they would have had a good action against him for their value. Any person making comments on a private correspondence thus purloined was of course guilty of receiving stolen goods, and to use an old vulgar adage, "the receiver was as bad as the thief." Were such publications to be countenanced and commented on as if the reality of their contents was unquestionable, there was an end to every degree of confidence in society, and all communication between man and man must cease. He did not suppose that the noble Lord opposite to him meant any thing in what he said: he could not, however, sit silent, while the character of an honourable, virtuous, and respectable nobleman was thus improperly introduced.

Lord Darnley said, that from the different tone, style and manner which the noble and learned Lord who had just sat down had for some time assumed, he was in hopes that the noble and learned Lord had laid aside that style of virulence, which was better calculated for the other side of the bar than for the deliberations of that House. His noble friend had expressed himself in the mildest possible terms of the correspondence in question, milder surely than its contents might have warranted. If he understood the noble and learned Lord, however, the term that a receiver was as bad as a thief, had been applied to his noble friend; language which could in no view be deemed parliamentary, and which was highly unbecoming in that House. He himself had expressed his opinion of the correspondence alluded to in stronger terms than those used by his noble friend. He did not feel inclined to change that opinion. The noble and learned Lord had said that he imputed nothing improper to his noble friend for the expressions which had dropped from him, and he begged the noble and learned Lord to know, that he understood that a similar sentiment extended to him. The noble Lord then proceeded to express his sentiments on the bill, of which he totally disapproved, as did Lord Harrowby and the Duke of Montrose.

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The *Marquis of Sligo* was of opinion that the discussion which the twin bills, as they were called, had met with, rendered much from him on their subject unnecessary. His Lordship said, that much as he was attached to Great Britain, and truly solicitous for its defence against all its enemies, if that was the only good he looked to from the present measure, he for one would cease to press it on their Lordships after the doubts that had been expressed as to its efficiency: he would say to his friends and countrymen that they had done enough in offering their services, he would advise them to stay at home, where they were known, respected, and loved, till a moment of more wisdom, or of more want, rendered their proffered services more acceptable. But his great object, his Lordship acknowledged, went much further; he wished to make the people of England and Ireland known to each other: more acquaintance, mutual returns of kind and friendly offices, intermarriages which would probably result from it, would bind both nations to each other; it would strengthen, cement, and consolidate the union of the empire that had been happily begun, and tend more to make us one people, than all the laws that the wisdom of the world could devise. The union of the Legislatures, which had been devised in Ireland under the government of a noble Marquis, the only man of the empire perhaps that could have accomplished it, was only one step to the object in contemplation from it: the union of sentiment, the union of interest and of feeling was that which alone would add strength and security to the British empire. If any man thought that object was obtained by the uniting of the Legislatures only, he was a weak and a foolish man, and a very shallow politician. Lord Sligo said he had sacrificed much to the measure; that he had risked on it his future consideration with his countrymen, and relinquished for it the most invaluable rights of his posterity. From the wisdom of the united Parliament he looked for his indemnification by a full completion of the measure, by which alone it could be beneficial; at present it was no more than a rope of sand, it would not hold through a struggle, but it would hold long enough perhaps to deluge both countries in blood before its separation was effected.

On the question that the bill be read a third time, the House divided, Contents 94, Non Contents 61, Majority in favour of the bill 33.

The bill was then passed, and the House adjourned.

HOUSE

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TUESDAY, APRIL 24.

Benjamin Weal, who had been committed to custody for having disobeyed a summons of the Middlesex Committee, was called to the bar, in order to be discharged.

The Speaker, before ordering him to be discharged, observed to him, that it was important to make known by the example made of him, that the House had the power to overtake and to punish all those who presumed to disobey their authority, and that they thought proper to be just to their own privileges: yet, being willing to believe his own statement, that his offence had arisen rather from ignorance than intention, they had humanely consented to his discharge, and that he was now discharged, on paying his fees.

The Speaker's admonition was ordered to be entered in the journals of the House.

The Irish revenue regulation bill was read a second time, and ordered to be committed the next day.

Also the Irish priests and deacons age bill.

Mr. Foster presented a petition from the manufacturers and traders in Irish linen against the new modification of the bill on the exportation of that article. To lie on the table. He then gave notice, that he should the next day move for a committee to take the said petition into consideration.

Mr. Foster, after adverting to the great delay that had occurred in bringing forward the public accounts for Ireland, many of which, especially that of the funded and of the unfunded debt, were yet wanted, concluded with moving, that the public accounts for Ireland should be annually laid before the House, in the same manner in which the accounts for Great Britain were directed to be annually laid before the House, pursuant to the 42d of the King.

Mr. Corry made no opposition to the motion, but explained the cause which had occasioned the delay.

Mr. Foster next proceeded to move for a great number of the public accounts for Ireland; but it was objected to his motions that previous notice had not been given of them. A conversation here ensued between several members respecting the practice or the necessity of giving notices, when it was generally agreed that in more modern times it appeared to be the established practice to give notice of such as were not

in the ordinary course of business. Mr. Foster then gave notice, that he should bring forward these motions the next day.

Mr. Lascelles brought up the report of the Committee appointed to consider of the petition presented to the House by the woollen manufacturers of Yorkshire.

On the motion that leave be given to bring in a bill pursuant to the prayer of the petition,

Admiral Berkeley declared it to be his intention to oppose its principle, as in direct contradiction with the spirit of the bill introduced last year on the same subject.

Mr. Wilberforce was sensible that the bill was of the utmost importance, as involving so large a portion of the manufacturing and commercial interests of the country. He was not, however, aware of that contradiction which it could appear to involve to the bill of last year, and to which the hon. Admiral had so pointedly adverted. The hon. Admiral would recollect that its provisions were limited to the county of York.

Leave was then given to bring in the bill, and the report upon which it was grounded was ordered to be printed.

Mr. Wilberforce, previous to bringing up a petition from the Society for bettering the Condition of the Poor, and which petition prayed for parliamentary assistance, in aid of the fund which they collect for the humane purpose of checking the contagion of putrid fever in the metropolis, took occasion to descant on the utility of such institutions, and on the very beneficial effects they had produced in many of the great manufacturing towns of the kingdom, particularly at Manchester.

The petition having received the approbation of the Crown, was then brought up, and referred to a Committee.

The eight millions and the one million and an half Exchequer bills were read a second time and committed for the next day.

Mr. Calcraft deferred his motion respecting an increased allowance to the volunteers till the next day se'nnight.

Mr. Kinnaid also deferred his motion respecting some India papers and accounts.

The annual accounts of the East India Company were laid upon the table.

LOYALTY LOAN.

Mr. Dent then rose to make his promised motion respecting the redress which ought to be given to the holders of the loan, commonly known by the name of the loyalty loan.

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The hon. Gentleman prefaced his motion with declaring, that he was actuated by no personal motives in bringing it forward; and that it was a duty which any Member of the House might feel incumbent on him, with respect to the return that was made to that patriotic description of men, who so zealously came forward in support of the country, at a moment when its wants and distresses had accumulated to the highest pitch. The hon. Gentleman here took a survey of the state of Europe at the period when this loan was contracted for, and shewed that both with regard to our external relations, and the internal concerns of the empire, our situation was most precarious and perilous. Such, however, was the moment when the most patriotic ardour was displayed by those who came forward with such alacrity in support of the distresses of Government, which, from a variety of causes, were very considerably aggravated at that moment. In proof of the distresses of Government, and of the eagerness of the loyalty loan subscribers to relieve them, the hon. Gentleman read a number of extracts from the correspondence which at that critical period had taken place between the then Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Directors of the Bank. After animadverting on the manner in which the opinion of the Attorney and Solicitor General had been set up in direct opposition to the claims of the subscribers, contrary to the spirit and the letter of the contract between Government and the parties, and the resolution of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer to abide by that opinion, in postponing for a whole year the redress to which the subscribers upon so many accounts were entitled, the hon. Gentleman concluded with moving, that the loyalty loan act should be referred to a Committee.

Mr. Vanfittart felt some difficulty in replying to the hon. Member, because he did not know whether he rested his motion on the law and the principles of good faith, or on the liberality of Parliament. If he came forward on the question of law, that had been decided already by the opinion of his learned Friends (the Crown lawyers), an opinion not hastily taken up, but deliberately given, and the courts of law were open for the relief of any person who thought himself aggrieved. The difference between the opinions of his learned friends, and that of another learned counsel, arose, in his conception, from a misstatement to the latter of the date of the ratification of the definitive treaty. As to the question of liberality, though he respected such a motive,

tive, he thought the House would be slow to countenance the liberality of Chancellors of the Exchequer to persons with whom they might have made bargains. The hon. Gentleman then entered into a detailed account of the variation between the original contract and the resolution of the Committee of Ways and Means, and between the resolution and the provisions of the bill; in order to prove that the difference had not arisen from any mistake, but from the discretion of Parliament exercising the right saved to it in the original contract of approving it in the terms stipulated or otherwise, the whole being only a provisional bargain subject to the approbation of the House.

Mr. Burroughs thought that the only question which in this case was to be decided, was the true construction of the decision of the House of Commons at the time mentioned. The loan was originally contracted for at the proposal of the Bank, and the terms of it were to be found in a printed paper in 1796. On the 8th of December in that year, a resolution of the House passed, approving of the proposal, except in two instances; the one respecting annuities for life, and the other with respect to notice to be given previous to repayment. We should in this case look to the resolutions of the Committee, rather than the act itself, otherwise what was to become of the good faith which ought to subsist between the Chancellor of the Exchequer and those who contract with him? He begged to know whether the three months notice in these resolutions were to be deemed concurrent, or superadded to the two years? He could not approve of the alteration which had been made by Parliament for substituting six months instead of three. Due notice ought at least to have been given to the subscribers; that such an alteration was intended to be introduced into the act, which was to pass upon the original articles of agreement. There were in the act two most important departures from the resolutions of the Committee; the one was substituting six months in place of three months notice to be given by the holders; and the other was, that these six months were to be superadded to the two years after the ratification of peace. Such at least was the construction put upon the act by the Attorney General. He did not argue the point upon the footing of liberality in the House, but upon its good faith; and, therefore, it was the duty of the House to rectify any error or inconsistency which may have crept into their proceedings.

Mr. Pitt had had a great share in the origin of this transaction,

action, and he thought it right to say that he meant to consider it merely as a question of good faith and justice. The statute upon which the difference of opinion existed, departed from the resolution of the Committee which preceded it, and which in his judgment was binding upon that House with respect to the contract with the subscribers to the loyalty loan. Some doubts existed, he understood, on the construction of the statute as to the time when the holders of the loyalty loan had a right to claim payment. For himself he had no hesitation to say, that his opinion coincided with that of Mr. Pigot, both as founded upon the justice of the case, and warranted by the letter of the act. It was stated, that the opinion of that learned barrister was erroneous, because it was founded upon an erroneous statement as to the date of the conclusion of the treaty of peace; but his opinion, it should be remembered, did not hinge upon any thing of that kind, but related to this question, whether the notice, which by the statute was to precede the payment of those subscribers, was to be concurrent with, or superadded to, the two years subsequent to the treaty of peace, which were to elapse before any claim should be made. From the words of the act, and from all the circumstances connected with the transaction, he was decidedly inclined to the opinion of Mr. Pigot, and to deviate from that opinion would not, in his judgment, be to accord with the principles of good faith, which he hoped Ministers would sufficiently feel it their duty to attend to. If there was any doubt in their mind as to the best mode of proceeding in consequence of the alteration in the act from the words of the resolution, he thought it was their duty to apply for the advice of that House, and if there was any mistake, to have it rectified, but by no means to trust to any opinion against the equity of the case. The bargain was known to be concluded when the resolution of the Committee was published, and any departure from that resolution in the progress of the bill, was an alteration made by one of the parties, without the consent of the other. As such departure had occurred through inadvertency, he trusted that Ministers would not run the risk of exposing Parliament to the charge of imposition by refusing to correct the evil complained of, a charge which was never attempted to be cast before. He begged leave to impress on the minds of the House that almost immediately after the resolution of the Committee was agreed to, by which the proposal of those subscribers was acceded to, some of them made a deposit, and

and many of them paid their first instalments before the bill was passed in which that resolution was altered.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* would have been inclined to admit the force of the right hon. Gentleman's reasoning, and that of the hon. Member who preceded him, if there had not been circumstances in the case to which neither of them had seemed to advert. The discretion of the House was not tied up by any resolutions of a Committee. The money which was paid upon the faith of these resolutions was not available till after the bill had received the concurrence of the Lords and the royal assent. It was nothing else than a deposit at the Bank, which remained till the bill had gone through all its stages. The notice which had been stuck up at the Bank, contained the reservations to which the parties subscribed, subsequent to which the resolutions of the Committee were agreed to. Good faith did not require that such bargains should always be made in conformity to such resolutions, because, in every stage of the bill, some alteration might take place. An application had been made by the holders of the loyalty stock for an additional bonus, in consequence of the loss they said they had sustained from a depreciation of the funds, and for an interval of four or five months, the contract having been made when 3 per cents, were at 56, but had fallen to 46 or 47. The grounds on which this application had been made were, that a second loan had been contracted for the service of the year. At that time the language of the Gentlemen who have spoken, was very different from their sentiments now. The attention of Parliament, and the attention of the subscribers, was particularly called to the transaction of that loyalty loan, and to the act by which it was to be raised, by the great debates which took place in Parliament at that time. There was not then one word of complaint, by either party, against the alterations which took place; the parties had, therefore, a fair and full opportunity of knowing the determination of the Legislature. To say that parties were thus to take advantage of their own ignorance, and come forward with complaints at this period, was applying a new principle which might prove a dangerous precedent. It was his duty to attend to the opinion of the officers of the Crown, while the parties may still have redress in a court of justice. The subscribers, however, had not a sure ground to stand upon. If the liberality of the House was to be appealed to, we must consider who are to be the objects of liberality, and who the objects of justice.

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The public interest had a claim to our consideration, and it must be a satisfaction to the House to be informed that the original subscribers will be paid at par, and receive something more than 7 per cent. and no loss would be sustained by the public. On these grounds he could not consent to the motion, or the objects of the hon. Gentleman. If, however, it should be the pleasure of the House not to acquiesce in the motion, he thought an arrangement might be made with the parties; that the time of payment of the bonus might be delayed till the time of peace, when payment would take place with less inconvenience to the public than at present.

Mr. Fox considered this question of infinite importance, and concurred with the whole of the arguments advanced by the right hon. Gentleman under the gallery (Mr. Pitt). He stated that it never was the custom to propose any alteration in a bill founded upon a resolution in a Committee of Ways and Means respecting any loan. He challenged the right hon. Gentleman on the Treasury bench, to quote one instance where any such proposition was made by him, or any other Gentleman who ever sat on the bench which he (Mr. Fox) had occupied for so many years. This observation he made in order to mark the respect for good faith towards public creditors, which had been uniformly felt in that House, and to shew that no one had ever before meditated any thing like an alteration in the terms of a loan particularly injurious to the contractors. It had often, to be sure, been attempted to throw out a loan bill altogether, as it might be in the Lords, but never in any case to alter the terms; that is, if the interest to the lender was proposed to be 5 per cent. no one ever moved in any stage of a loan bill, that such interest should be reduced, and for this obvious reason, that it would be a scandalous breach of faith to new-model a contract without the consent, and in a manner not subject to the control of one of the contracting parties. The contracting parties in this transaction he considered to be the House of Commons and the subscribers to the loyalty loan, and he trusted that that House would never by an act of power violate a solemn act of covenant, to which it subscribed when it agreed to the report of the Committee, the resolution of which formed the bargain now under discussion. The hon. Member asserted, that the contractors had a right to consider the resolution of that Committee as conclusive of their bargain, and could not be supposed to have any cognizance of the subsequent proceeding upon

upon the bill, for it would be monstrous to extend to such a case the maxim of *ignorantia leges non excusat*. The alteration, therefore, which took place, they could not be considered as aware of before they advanced their money. To make use then of such an alteration to evade the original agreement with them, he could not but pronounce as little short of an absolute fraud. Indeed he could not help considering the conduct which Ministers seemed resolved to observe towards those creditors as little less than bad faith personified. That they should, in the construction of an act, the meaning of which was confessed to be doubtful, take that construction which was opposite to good faith, instead of the contrary, was very extraordinary; but the right hon. Gentleman had said, that only a certain proportion of the loyalty loan holders had asserted this claim, and all the words he had used on that ground, to speak in the mildest manner of them, was, in fact, so much flung away. The right hon. Gentleman indeed promised, that if this motion should be rejected, a negotiation would be set on foot with the persons complaining, to induce them to postpone their demand until another opportunity, and such negotiation to reconcile them was, it seems, to be preceded by a vote of that House, to shew that Ministers had the absolute power to deal with those claims in what manner they pleased—particularly if it should not be convenient to Ministers to discharge them. Here the hon. Member took notice of the argument *ob convenienti* made use of by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and reprobated it as indecent and unbecoming upon such an occasion as that before the House. What, he would ask, would be thought of any private individual who should resort to such an argument to release himself from the execution of a solemn contract, who should propose to sacrifice justice to convenience? How then was the House and the public to judge of a Minister who talked of convenience as an objection to the discharge of a debt legally contracted and justly due to a certain number of public creditors?

The Chancellor of the Exchequer explained.

Mr. Tierney opposed the motion, and expressed some surprise at the vehemence and asperity with which it had been supported by the hon. Member who had just sat down. Not so the right hon. Gentleman under the gallery who preceded him (Mr. Pitt), and who had with his wonted fairnets, liberality, and temper, delivered his sentiments upon the subject, and candidly admitted that there could be

be no sinister intention, or no interest whatever, on the part of his Majesty's Ministers, in resisting the motion, or any purpose of committing a breach of parliamentary faith with the holders of the loyalty loan; and had he himself considered the resistance of the present motion in any such point of view, he would be amongst the last men living to give his sanction to such a breach of faith. On the contrary, he considered the subscribers to the loan as having no such complaint to make in justice. They had, upon the resolution having passed the Committee of that House, deposited, as was usual in such cases, 10 per cent. as a security to the Minister to bind them to fill up the remainder of the subscription, after the bill founded upon such resolution should have passed into a law. The bill founded upon the resolution, actually was brought into the House with the very clause against which so much censure had been directed. It had been several successive days in the course of discussion, both in that and the other House of Parliament, and the subscribers were apprised of the clause in question. They were at liberty, therefore, to withhold the subscription, if they disliked the terms expressed in the clause; but having afterwards continued their payments, they certainly had now no right to complain of a bargain they had ratified with their eyes open. He supported generally the arguments of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whom he said, was only acting on this occasion, as he conceived himself bound, by an act of Parliament, in a duty to the public, and not by any motive of private interest or caprice. It was obviously the intention of the framers of this bill, to provide against the claims for redemption of this loan from coming forward at a time when Parliament should not be sitting, when they might be embarrassed in providing for the payments, and therefore it was, that the 10th of October and the 5th of April next after the expiration of two years from the ratification of the treaty of peace, were named as the periods from which the six months notice was required in the bill. He was not aware of the motives which actuated the right hon. Gentleman, in the insertion of this clause in the bill, notwithstanding the resolution of the Committee had certainly some meaning founded on just reasons; and that the subsequent amendment, upon which the whole of the present debate turned, was inserted in the Committee on the bill, not without some reasons at the time assigned. Now that amendment came to be inserted, he could not now precisely account; however, it was there, and had

passed into a law with the consent of both Houses, and by that law Ministers were bound to act, until the House should think fit to repeal it. He was somewhat at a loss to account for the particular time chosen by the hon. Member for bringing his motion forward, the very day before the Chancellor of the Exchequer had appointed to negotiate for the loan for the service of the year; and one of the principal grounds upon which his right hon. Friend was justified in adhering strictly to the letter of the act of Parliament on the occasion was, that if it was understood the loyalty loan was to be paid off now, instead of the 5th of April 1805, it would operate materially to depreciate the terms of the loan.

Mr. Canning supported the motion and the arguments of his right hon. Friend near him (*Mr. Pitt*), and after commenting on the arguments of the right hon. Gentleman who last spoke, observed, that some stress had been laid upon an argument that only one-third the number of the loyalty loan stockholders had come forward with their claims on this occasion; and that the number of the original subscribers to the loan, compared with the present holders of such stock, were extremely few, as if that were an argument to deteriorate the strength of their claims; but he begged to say, whoever were the holders of that stock at this moment, or whether they held it by inheritance or purchase, it devolved to them with all its rights, privileges, advantages, and disadvantages, on as full tenure as the original subscribers, and therefore their claim was justified to the full extent.

Mr. Tierney explained, and vindicated the statements he had formerly made.

Mr. Pitt had not a very distinct recollection of the terms contracted on, or the alteration that took place, but was certain that no communication could have been made to the holders of the loan in regard to that alteration. He regretted that he had not a distinct recollection, but entered into a detail of the circumstances, so far as his recollection could serve him, and concluded by stating, that on the ground that the notice should be given at the expiration of the two years from the signing of the preliminaries of peace, and the six months added to the two years, the time of payment would turn out to be pretty nearly on the 10th of October.

Sir William Pulteney opposed the motion.

Mr. Henry Thornton observed, that it had been urged that only the proprietors of eight millions of the loyalty loan had

had come forward with their claims of notice on the present occasion, and that the proprietors of the remaining sixteen millions were not at all concerned in the present motion, nor any way urgent on the business; but he begged leave to say, that the only motive which prevented the remainder from coming forward with their notices, was because they were in utter uncertainty as to what was the proper step to pursue, and only waited the discussion of the House that night. They were by no means indifferent to their interests, however, on the occasion; nor insensible to the very material difference between the redemption of the loan now, and the postponement of that redemption for another year. For reducing the subject to a mere question of profit and loss, it would make a difference of at least 4 per cent. on the value of the stock to be paid off now instead of April 1805; because, as that stock was now at 90, immediate payment would raise it to 100, whereas the delay of a year would continue it at most at its present price; and the proprietors of 16 millions, he believed, could not be very indifferent to such a consideration as 4 per cent. upon the amount of such a capital.

Mr. Morris opposed the motion, and maintained the arguments of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The *Attorney General* also opposed the motion, maintained the points of law, and utterly denied that the House of Commons was to be bound down, in legislating a bill, by the right hon. Gentleman under the gallery, who had introduced the bill with the very clause objected to, had brought in that clause, and substituted the subsequent amendment, in consequence of some conference or communication with the original subscribers, though it escaped his recollection.

Mr. Pitt explained, and denied having had any such conference.

Mr. S. Thornton also denied any such communication, and said, that the original subscribers were considerable losers by the loan in the outset, as in consequence of the clause, after the first payment, the stock was at a discount of two per cent.

Mr. Dent shortly replied to several of the arguments against his motion; and in answer to an imputation made to him by the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that he had himself resisted and voted against the claim of the holders of the loyalty loan, for an additional bonus of five per cent. when it fell to a depreciation of 13 per cent.

stated, that on that occasion he had resisted their claim upon the ground that they had made their loan on a free and fair speculation, upon their own terms, and ought to abide by the bargain, because, if their fund had been raised 13 per cent. they would not have felt themselves bound to account with the public; but upon the very same principle of justice he opposed them then, he would support them now, because he thought their claim right.

The House then divided: For the motion 76—Against it 100.—Majority 24.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer gave notice, that on Friday, in the Committee of Supply, he should submit a motion for granting a further sum for the completion of the Caledonian Canal; and also that he should move the plantation estimates.

Lord Castlereagh stated, that his Majesty had been waited on with the addresses for a list of half-pay officers, and had given directions accordingly.

The account of ships and vessels in commission, and of artificers employed in his Majesty's dock yards, was withdrawn, on account of an error, and a correct one presented.

Mr. Vanstittart moved, that there be laid before the House an account of the quantity of wine and raw sugar imported and exported in the year ending 5th of January 1804.—Ordered.

The bills relating to the pay, clothing, and allowances of the militia in Great Britain and Ireland, were read a second time, and committed for the next day.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 25.

Counsel were farther heard relative to the appeal cause, Richardson v. the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. To proceed again on Friday.

The bills on the table were forwarded. Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 25.

A message from the House of Lords announced that their Lordships had agreed to the Irish militia augmentation bill, and the Irish militia transfer bill.

Mr. Jervis gave notice that on that day se'nnight he should

should move for leave to bring in a bill founded on the fourth report of the commissioners for naval inquiries, relative to the early distribution of prize-money.

Mr. Dent gave notice that he should, in the course of a few days, unless some other Gentleman brought the subject forward, submit a motion to the House with respect to the loyalty loan.

The House went through a committee on the priests orders bill. The report was received, and the bill ordered to be read a third time the next day.

The Committee on the Irish revenue regulation bill was ordered for Friday next.

On the motion of Mr. Bond, the House resolved itself into a Committee on the act of the 43d George III. relating to the carrying of passengers to the plantations, &c. In the Committee leave was given to bring in a bill to exempt from the provisions of that act all vessels employed in the Newfoundland trade. The bill was afterwards brought in, read a first time, and Mr. Bond moved, that it be then read a second time, on account of the expediency that existed for the trade to Newfoundland not being delayed. Sir John Newport was of the same opinion. Mr. Francis wished to be informed of the urgent necessity for hurrying through the bill, and was satisfactorily answered by Mr. Bond. The bill was then read a second time, and ordered to be committed the next day.

A person from the Secretary's office in Ireland presented certain accounts, which were laid on the table.

On the motion of Mr. Western, an account of all clover seed exported from Great Britain to foreign countries, and imported from foreign countries to Great Britain, during the last seven years, ending the 5th of January 1804, distinguishing the amount in each year, and the ports, together with the duties and drawbacks thereon, was ordered to be laid before the House.

Mr. Secretary Yorke brought in a bill to suspend the operation of the Irish army of reserve act. Read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time on Tuesday, and to be printed.

On the suggestion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Committee on the Aylesbury election bill, which stood for Friday, was postponed till Tuesday. Lord Porchester also postponed his motion until Thursday.

Mr. Wilberforce gave notice, that he should, on Friday se'nnight, make a motion for the abolition of the slave trade.

Mr.

Mr. Corry rose to move for a Committee of the House, in order to state the terms upon which he had concluded the loan for Ireland; but on the suggestion of Mr. Pitt, who observed that business of more importance would occupy the House that evening, the right hon. Gentleman postponed the statement till Friday next, trusting the House would enable him on that day to transmit the necessary information to the Government of Ireland.

SUSPENSION OF THE ARMY OF RESERVE ACT.

Mr. Secretary Yorke moved the order of the day for the House going into a Committee upon this bill.

Mr. Pitt—Sir, upon the motion which the right hon. Gentleman has just now made, I feel myself called upon to express, at some considerable length, my sentiments as to the real object and effects of this bill, and think myself called upon, for the reasons which I will state to the House, to give my negative to that motion. I do not, however, wish to be understood, that by my doing so, I mean to disapprove of the ultimate object for which such a bill has been introduced; for, on the contrary, I shall take the liberty of proposing other measures in lieu of it. My chief objection to the further progress of this bill has been already introduced in the debate which took place on the discussion upon other measures, connected with our general system of defence. On that species of general objection, therefore, it is not my intention at present to take up much of the time of the House; I mean only shortly to remind Gentlemen, that it has been alleged, and, as I think, without an answer, that the complexion and nature of this bill goes to suspend the operation of the army of reserve, which is neither more nor less than to relinquish all chance of any further benefit being derived from the bill which constitutes that species of force; I mean, in so far as it tended to add to our disposable force, which all persons in this House agree in thinking we ought to resort to, as the principal means of our country's defence. I aver, that we are relinquishing all chance of reaping further advantage from a measure which, however much it may have been impeded and embarrassed in reaching to its full effect, has been found to add, within these last twelve months, a supply to the regular army, which in the present circumstances of the country we could not have attained by any other mode whatever. It goes, I say, to relinquish that benefit, without proposing any other adequate plan in order to accomplish the same

same object. This measure, when first introduced, was avowed to be a part of a plan, the object of which was to increase our disposable force. The three parts into which that plan is divided are—the raising a considerable number of additional battalions—the suspending the operation of the army of reserve—and the increase of the militia of Ireland. On these several measures I shall not at present attempt to enlarge; but I must say, that my opinion is, that neither of them promises to be, in the smallest degree, adequate to its purpose. The plan of increasing the Irish militia is one which is to give us a transfer of a most limited species of force, not adopted upon any well founded grounds for the interchange of services, nor upon any grounds that justify a variation from the general rule, which limits the service of the militia to their respective countries. That part of the plan seems thus to partake of these and other disadvantages, while it partakes of none of the advantages which it is alleged by some that it will embrace. With respect to the augmentation of the Irish militia, I may just observe, that it is a measure which is slow in its effect, distant in its operation, and that there is no possible excuse for bringing it forward at the present period, but in order to render the transfer of the Irish militia to this country more practicable. If this be the sole reason that can be alleged for such a measure, it cannot render that transfer effectual at the present moment, nor on any future occasion. At the very time we are stating our wish to augment our regular army, we are thus going on to augment a species of force, which, however respectable and desirable on ordinary occasions, may thereby be carried beyond its proper limits. It creates all the disadvantages of competition which the same government were desirous of reducing. While Ministers are endeavouring to put a stop to that competition in England, they seem not to advert, that they are introducing all those disadvantages and inconveniencies complained of, into another part of the united kingdom. All this, too, is done with the intention of stopping a competition, in order merely to substitute such a force for the army of reserve, as would neither afford so many advantages, or contribute such aid to the real object in view. This system is accompanied too with the singular circumstance, that it is proposed at a time when we wish to increase our regular regiments, by raising new levies both in England and Ireland. In England, you determine to stop the operation of an act, in case it should raise a competition with these new levies, while in

in Ireland we are substituting a worse kind of force, by levying a new militia; and I find, at the same time, on looking into the bill now before us, that there is no mention of suspending the operation of the army of reserve act in Ireland. Is it not plain, Sir, that if a suspension of a similar act as to Ireland, does not take place at the same time, that the effect of the competition—[Here the right hon. Gentleman was interrupted by a cry of *hear! hear!* and at the same time was informed that a similar bill as to Ireland had been introduced that day, previous to his having come into the House.] Mr. Pitt then continued—I beg pardon for having thus alluded to what I thought had been neglected towards our sister country, but I really must confess, that I never heard it included in any motion made upon this subject. I am glad to hear that such consistency has been observed in this particular, but as the law yet stands, whatever may be the number of the army of reserve in Ireland (only, I believe, 1000 men), there would be a prospect of a preference being shown to the militia, instead of that other species of force. The services of the one were by law limited solely to Ireland, while those of the other extended to both countries. There was no chance of thus procuring a greater number of men, and therefore to procure men in a shape in which they cannot be made so efficient, or so apt to enter into the regular army, is certainly a plan which is far from being advisable. As to the other measure of raising new levies, I may observe on the absurdity, that while you cannot even procure men for a limited service at a high bounty, it is proposed to raise men for an extended degree of service, at a lower degree of bounty, without at all offering any other or new encouragement to men to come forward. Ministers seem to trust solely to the great recommendation and influence of those people who raise men from their tenantry and clans, and to various other local circumstances, which they imagine will give facility to their measures; but nothing of this kind has been stated in answer to any of the objections which have been made. There is just as much prospect of raising men for the existing battalions as for new levies; but then it is said that you give inducement, by raising new regiments for rank. I cannot believe that such will be the case, unless you say that officers are thus to be induced to give additional bounties to operate as an encouragement. Such are the principal reasons for my objecting to such a bill at this moment. If the present system has not a sufficient efficacy, the suspension of the

the army of reserve, the more especially, ought not to take place at the present time. I think, that as the army of reserve now stands, no man could, with propriety, attach to it such an appellation, because it has, in reality, so little similitude to an army of reserve. I think that none of those Gentlemen who are advocates for the suspension of that force, will carry their arguments so far as not to approve of our considering whether or not there may be a mode to raise men for a limited service, which would embrace a still greater number of persons, and such as cannot be reached by any other means for the regular service, provided it can be done without increasing the complaint of competition. I confess I am not sanguine enough to suppose, that any plan which I can suggest for that desirable purpose, can be entirely free from inconvenience. I do not know but objections may be made to my proposals, which do not present themselves to me at this moment, but sure I am, that there is no man who would not be disposed to consider such an object highly desirable. All I wish is, that before we determine to suspend the army of reserve act, we should consider, in the first place, whether or not some means might not be fallen upon, which, without any suspension at all, would enable us to derive advantages from that very species of force, by modifying and improving it; and, secondly, if that force be really found to be ineffectual, to consider whether the suspending it in a limited manner, is not doing too little, and whether we ought not to do it away altogether. I shall now proceed to submit to the House the measures which, in my opinion, will have a beneficial tendency towards the accomplishment of the objects in view. They are such as have been the result of a great deal of investigation into our general system of defence, and mature consideration of the circumstances of the country. I am not wishing, by any means, to obstruct the measures of Government; I am only opposing their present plan, in order to substitute another in its place, which I humbly conceive may have a better effect. I therefore beg, that the further consideration of this bill be postponed. Gentlemen will perceive, that the general foundation of the measures, which it is my wish to submit to the House, rests upon this principle, that in the present state of society, and considering the present circumstances of the country, looking at the state of commerce and of agriculture, all the demands for labour, and all the temptations which divert men from enlisting in the regular army; looking, I say, to the distinction which naturally exists

ists betwixt an unlimited service, and one which confines men to their own soil, there must be a probability that in such a country as this, a great number of men may be easily induced, by proper means, to enter into a service which is limited in point of its extent. If such be the case, it is natural to suppose, that men might still further be induced to extend their service, so that the regular army might be increased to such an extent as cannot be attained by any ordinary means of recruiting, even although all competition were completely abolished. I assume this doctrine, that when persons are once induced to enter into a limited service, the gradation into one that is unlimited becomes thereby much more easy. This second step is besides greatly to be facilitated, when aided by those emotions of ardour and patriotism which warfare tends to excite in the breasts of all ranks of the people. The mere energy of the English character, and that sort of stupendous influence which reigns in their hearts, when roused by actual necessity to great exertions, not only for their own safety, but for the honour and glory of their country, would, by a judicious and well regulated management, induce men to come forward from the one species of force into the other, and tend greatly to produce immediate advantages for the defence of the kingdom. I think I may assume, that the militia is not that species of force from which the transition into the regular army is most to be looked for. It has been tried already, both as to officers and men, and it would be better that the militia were never again exposed to a repetition of it. The services of the militia ought, according to the opinion of most men, to be limited, otherwise it cannot be maintained with full effect, if it exceeds 40,000 men in England; for if the number were to be extended, the nature of that system would be changed. I think that the augmentation of the militia was justifiable on a former occasion in Ireland, but it is far from being desirable at present, and cannot, indeed, with any advantage be adopted. My notion of the manner of ballotting, and forming battalions, is very different from the mode at present observed. Whatever objections Gentlemen may have against the army of reserve, I beg them to stop till they see how it interferes with the recruiting service. We should endeavour, as soon as possible, gradually to recur to our original number of militia, that is, to decrease them to forty thousand men in England, and eight thousand men in Scotland. After doing this, we ought to increase the number of the
army

army of reserve in the same proportion as the militia is decreased, We have at present 70,000 militiamen in England and Scotland, and we should have (were the numbers completed) about 40,000 of the army of reserve in Great Britain. We ought therefore to reduce the militia to 48,000; but the other description of force should be raised from 40,000 to 64,000, which would be done by taking 20,000 from the English militia, and 4000 from that of Scotland. I do think that this would be a more judicious arrangement of our force; but I would not propose that it should be put into execution suddenly and abruptly, at a time like the present, when we are making immediate and vigorous preparations to meet the enemy. I would not begin by reducing the militia, but I would not fill up any vacancies therein during the present war, leaving it at the same time to decline, by its contributing to the gradual increase of this other force. This would at least take away one half of the competition in recruiting the regular army, and would bring the whole into a more concentrated point of view, thereby rendering it more manageable. My first object is thus to alter the proportion of our disposable force, and if by experience we know that out of a force, (the army of reserve) of which we have not, in point of fact, raised above 30,000 men in England and Scotland, there has already been added 9000 to our regular army, I think there will exist a chance of adding thereto in a greater proportion, according to the increase of the army of reserve, when men are empowered and encouraged to enlist into an extended service. The next measure I propose, is one which, of all others, would tend most to the object in view, if it could possibly be accomplished. I will urge it the more strongly, as I think that no objections can be stated to it, in times like the present, when it is the duty of every member of the House to submit to difficulties, and to recommend such a submission to the country at large. The present period, I may venture to say, is altogether unexampled in the history of this nation, or of the world itself. It is not merely a question of making ourselves safe in our own country; we must take a more extensive view of the matter, and consider the state of Europe. Whatever may be the wreck and devastation practised on the continent, whatever may be the miserable fortune of the other nations of Europe, however much they may be overwhelmed by unjust ambition, and insupportable despotism, we must not rest satisfied in our own security, and imagine that this part of the globe is alone sufficient for our repose. We must extend our views, and by a proper appli-

cation of our own resources, we may ultimately be enabled, either to afford assistance to other nations, or rouse their latent energies, and encourage them to unite in the adoption of a similar system. We ought not, therefore, to look to those objects of pressure, those parochial or local difficulties, which, though it be our duty to mitigate as much as possible, it is still our duty to recommend the endurance of them, in order to increase our disposable force, and not to desist because we may conceive that there is already enough to defend our own shores. I do therefore hold, that there is a necessity for incurring considerable inconvenience. The second part of my proposal, therefore, would be that this force should not merely be stiled an army of reserve, but that out of 60,000, I would wish that one-fourth, or one-fifth part of the number should be allowed each year to enlist into the regular army; and that whatever vacancies might thereby be created should be filled up in the same manner. This might furnish the means of adding 10 or 15,000 men annually, over and above the mode usually followed in recruiting the regular army, and would prove a more effectual increase to our regular force than any other mode of recruiting, even though we were to sacrifice all the other species of service. But, Sir, it is not merely by raising a force, out of which the army of reserve may be recruited, that the advantage of this plan consists; I look also for constituting this force in such a manner as to render it much more useful for the defence of the country, even in regard to their limited service. When the army of reserve was first raised they were separated into battalions, without any reference to the regular army. Out of that army of reserve, so formed, men have been allowed to enlist indiscriminately into the regulars, and the time of enlisting has been allowed to interfere with the ordinary mode of recruiting. One material point I wish to submit to the House is, that there ought to be a proper proportion of quotas observed in the same manner as in the militia in each county of Great Britain, and also that some measure ought to be adopted, to establish a permanent connexion between all our regular regiments in Great Britain and Ireland. This plan has been often talked of, but never yet put into execution, though it would evidently tend to enlarge the system of recruiting; the soldiers would look on one another as relations and friends much more readily, if instead of raising new regiments, a second battalion was added to every regiment in each county; the connexion would then be much closer, and much more operative.

operative. But it does not stop there; as our present force stands, an officer who commands in a battalion of the army of reserve, must feel a considerable degree of grief and disappointment, at seeing himself deprived of those men whom, by his exertions, he has perfected in their discipline, owing to the permission of such indiscriminate recruiting. It tends to undermine the principles of discipline, because every man feels less inclination to obey, when he knows that he can at any period separate himself from his officer, and go into another regiment; but if an union be kept up betwixt two battalions, the one of the reserve, and the other of the regulars, what will be the consequence? There will then be a perpetual interchange betwixt the two battalions. Every officer will know that his men are only to withdraw from one battalion into the other, with which he is thus connected; and the men themselves will know that they will probably be led on to action, if not by the individual officers who formerly commanded them, at least that they will be likely to be present with them in the same field, and it will, no doubt, prove an encouragement to propriety of conduct and military exertion. I maintain that these measures are likely to have an incredible effect in procuring recruits, and those too of the best kind. The mutual interchange will also tend to the benefit of the officers, because it will afford them experience, by preventing the frequent introduction of those who are only beginners in the military pursuits. Indeed, in a short time the whole of your defensive force would thus become as good and efficient as your regular force; by that means the men will, as it were, become worth double their number, with a view to the defence of the country; they will be changed in a short time to ready-made soldiers, while, at the same time, the plan of regular recruiting may be enlarged, and made more effectual. It thus unites several advantages in every point of view, unless in so far as the mode in which it is to be raised may increase a competition. Considering, however, the numerous benefits to be derived by the adoption of such a plan, perhaps gentlemen may consent to admit of a certain degree of competition, seeing that it will be materially narrowed. It appears clearly to my mind, that by the plan I have suggested, the disadvantageous competition in the recruiting of the regular army will be avoided. As the ballot is now regulated, if it falls upon a person whose engagements in life, or other circumstances, render it unfit that he should serve, he must find a substitute, and no limit is assigned to the sum he must give to procure one; he is to sacrifice perhaps 40l.

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or 50*l*. and expose himself and his family to numerous privations, not for the benefit of the state, but from the impolitic plan adopted to supply its exigences. The effect is obvious; it has occasioned a species of subscription club, which converts the matter into a sort of parochial rate, by which the important military duty of recruiting is committed to parish officers, instead of being entrusted to officers who are competent to discharge it; and being in such hands, they bid against each other without limit of discretion, to the utter ruin of the service. What I have proposed requires, that if the person on whom the ballot falls will not serve, he shall pay a certain moderate fixed sum; but if he serves, then he shall receive the same amount he would otherwise pay. Another precaution in the scheme is, that the substitute should be found by the parish, and not by the individual; and further, the person so provided is to be taken from the hundred, and not from the great market towns, unless under the predicament I shall presently explain. The bounty given will also, according to these arrangements, be examined by the magistrates of the respective counties, who will prevent any deviation from the limits prescribed by law. It will immediately occur, on the review of this plan, that there will be no possibility of surpassing the bounty, and from the local limitation there will be no danger of interfering, in places of extensive population, with the recruiting of the regular army. The next consideration to which I request the attention of the House is, the supply of the vacancies, or to provide for those cases where the hundred can procure no substitute, which inability may accrue from a great variety of causes. In such circumstances the bounty is to be made over to the Colonel, who is to pay the limited sum he so receives for the more limited service he requires; that is, that the recruiting parties he employs are to procure men for this particular service; and regulating the quantum of bounty by the nature of the duty, no pernicious competition will arise, as the larger bounty will always be given for enlisting into the regular army. There must, in a country like this, where the sources of comfort and enjoyment in life are so well understood, be a great variety of persons who will enlist for a much smaller bounty into a temporary service, but who would not, for any emolument whatever, engage for life in a military occupation. Thus, I conceive, I leave undisturbed the mode of recruiting now employed, and I add a new mode, which I will presume to be capable of doubling the supply from the ordinary

nary sources. Such, Sir, I flatter myself, is to improve and enlarge the regular army, by presenting novel expedients for the purpose, and thus to conduce essentially to the means of internal defence and external warfare. It has been justly complained, that the measures for this purpose lately resorted to, so materially interfere with each other, that they successively obstruct whatever is adopted: it has been my endeavour to avoid this error, and to combine the several parts of this extensive system in such a way, that a mutual co-operation may be produced, and that what is good and eligible in itself may be rendered better and more desirable by this connexion. Objections have been stated to the introduction, at this time, of any great scheme of improvement in the service; it is, however, true that the moment of public difficulty is often the crisis of public improvement; the sense of danger inspires men with a portion of zeal and enthusiasm which enables them to surmount the obstructions by which they are surrounded, and they are capable of performing what, under other circumstances, they could scarcely contemplate. What is now recommended seems to me beneficial, whether the country be exposed to the horrors of war, or in the enjoyment of the blessings of peace. In the present circumstances of Europe, should hostilities terminate, the permanence of such a situation would depend upon the respectable state of your peace establishment, more than on any other circumstance: this I felt, and I recommended on a recent occasion the necessity of preserving a competent force. By the present proposal this advantage would be secured, a body of men with liberty to recruit into the regular army would be provided, and, without any ballot, 10 or 15,000 recruits would be ready to supply the ranks in the troops of the line, and able to act with them on the most difficult service, without disgracing their companions in the field of danger. If all or any of these benefits be unavoidably connected with the measure, the House, I am sure, will be disposed to give it an attentive consideration; but I am far from having exhausted all its merits. By the plan it appears, that the officers attached to those provisional troops would be those who are most capable of bringing their discipline to perfection, and in consequence they will be much more ready to act with the troops of the line, than the supplies from the militia, or from the army of reserve. It will not be necessary to abandon the sound maxims of state policy by which the militias of Britain and Ireland are confined to their native territory, and the disposable

disposable force of the country may be dismissed to those situations where its gallantry and conduct will redound most to the advantage and glory of the country. I have, Sir, on all these grounds, thought it right to resist your leaving the chair, to convert this House into a Committee for the consideration of the propriety of suspending the army of reserve act, and I hope it will not be thought, that on a question of this magnitude I have intruded too much on your indulgence.

Mr. Secretary Yorke—Notwithstanding the respect I am always disposed to pay to whatever is suggested by the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, I must confess, after paying the most strict and minute attention to his reasoning, I have heard nothing to influence my mind to postpone the consideration of the present bill. A few observations on the grounds of the measure will explain my meaning. I before stated, that two objects were proposed: first, to render the internal defence of the country complete, which was of the highest importance: secondly, to augment the disposable force so far as to enable us to annoy the enemy in his own possessions. I have the happiness to say, that the first object is completed; the second is the matter now to be considered, and the plan proposed for this purpose is a temporary expedient to increase the facility of the new levies for the supply of the troops of the line. The material means of promoting this appeared to us to be by removing the pernicious competition, and by introducing into this country a certain proportion of the militia of Ireland. Objections have been made to the latter as diminishing the security of that part of the united kingdom, and interfering with the augmentation of the regular force there. The policy or impolicy, in this respect, depends much upon the influence of powerful individuals to supply the deficiency thus to be occasioned; and after informing myself on the subject, by the assistance of those who are best acquainted with it, I do believe the means are competent to produce the end; and that the inconvenience to Ireland will be transitory, while the benefit to this part of the empire is permanent. Putting then that inquiry out of the question, it is to be considered, whether the suspension of the army of reserve act for twelve months will or will not render it more easy to raise the new levies, by taking away all competition. Withdrawing the operation of this act for a time, is no acknowledgment that it was, at the time it was passed, impolitic. Certain it is, that its effects have been to raise a much larger force in a much shorter period than could

could have been done by any other resource; and the right hon. Gentleman, in the course of his speech, as I understood him, had the candour to make this acknowledgment. By this act, in the short interval of six weeks or two months, 30,000 men were raised in Britain, and 7,000 men in Ireland; but notwithstanding this success in the outset, it at this time barely supports itself, or supplies the deficiencies which are daily occurring from sickness, desertion, and other causes. Thus the benefit is only nominal, while the detriment is real, in obstructing the future levies on which the increase of our disposable force is to depend. It is not at all necessary that Gentlemen should have made up their minds on the plans projected for those levies; but, in whatever way men are to be raised, this competition must be destroyed, or the best concerted scheme will be disappointed. If Ministers should persevere in the levies, on a principle objectionable to the House, the money necessary to the execution of the measure may be withheld, and thus it must be rendered abortive. Neither is it indispensable that the House should assert the inexpediency of the right hon. Gentleman's proposal; his plan may be beneficial, and yet it may be right to adopt this temporary measure, and even as preparatory to his own. It is perfectly clear that at least the plan of the right hon. Gentleman is not calculated to produce the immediate augmentation required. Thirteen or fourteen thousand men are wanted to supply the deficiency, and both on his scheme, and under the existing act, it is impracticable to obtain them. In this predicament the present scheme is suggested, which alone seems competent to produce the desired effect. The right hon. Gentleman states two objections to the mode in which the levies are to be conducted. First, he says, they will be ineffectual, because low bounties will not procure men, when the larger remuneration is found unproductive: secondly, he says, that the scheme of compensation by rank is inexpedient. His first difficulty, at least, seems equally applicable to his own proposal; for if we cannot procure men with the additional inducement of rank to the officers, how will he obtain them without this incentive? The bounty proposed for the levies has been announced to be 10*l.* 10*s.* and 2*l.* 2*s.* for levy money to the officers. Gentlemen may suppose that is not sufficient; for the sake of argument let it be so: but is this the proper time to discuss that particular? to the present question it is wholly irrelevant. The object of this bill is to facilitate the means of augmenting the army, and for this end it is pro-

posed to destroy the competition in the market ; this is the only subject of inquiry, and should not be rendered obscure by extraneous matter. I hope that the House will not be contented on this occasion, with the crude observations of Gentlemen, however distinguished for their general talents, who are not versed, from education and habits, in military affairs. It was the duty of his Majesty's Ministers, on a step of this kind, to consult his Royal Highness the Commander in Chief on the quantum of bounty ; and the Duke, in concurrence with other officers of the first rank, has considered no larger compensation should be offered in the present condition of the service. Of the same source of information I have availed myself, as to the propriety of the compensation by rank, and therefore I may speak to this part of the objection with the same confidence. The duty is to be undertaken by officers of the line, who are to advance only one step in rank, and the number of men is to be completed within the period of six months ; but if any further delay be admitted, the privilege of rank is to be withdrawn. Further, the bounty on no consideration is to be exceeded ; and an officer offending by such excess, is not only to forfeit his promotion, but is liable to be tried by a court martial for the offence. The present scheme of raising men for rank, must not be prejudiced by the supposition it in any respect resembles the mischievous system adopted under the administration of the right hon. Gentleman, which had nearly annihilated the British army. But the right hon. Gentleman says, if the bill be ineffectual, why not repeal instead of suspending it ? The bill has been beneficial ; it may be so again under new circumstances, and it does not appear to me prudent to abrogate it entirely, before the system for the regulation of the public force has received a fair, full, and solemn investigation. Whatever may be the sentiments of Gentlemen on particular expedients, it is the universal opinion that to increase the regular force is a most desirable object. The right hon. Gentleman, with that powerful eloquence he has always at his command, has represented the humbled condition of continental Europe, and the probability that this country will be the foundation whereon the beautiful superstructure of European liberty and happiness will be erected ; and it is in this flattering expectation he has dwelt with peculiar felicity on the necessity of maintaining on the most respectable footing the British army. The right hon. Gentleman has observed, that among the persons in this nation engaged in the pursuits of commerce and agriculture great

great numbers would elect to serve in the army, if the time of occupation on that duty were limited. I readily admit this position, and it will be acknowledged that the plan of the army of reserve, and of the militia, is consistent with this principle. The right hon. Gentleman made many remarks, with which I am not disposed to quarrel. He considers the militia as too numerous, and deems 40,000 in England, and 8000 in Scotland, sufficient. He would have the supplementary militia also transferred to the army of reserve, and then, with these assistances, instead of 40,000 for the latter, he would have it increased to 64,000. He says, he would not reduce the militia, but he would not fill up the vacancies; the vacancies should be carried to the account of the army of reserve. On these matters I shall not now animadvert, because they would lead me from the point under review; but, in respect to the objection of the right hon. Gentleman to call upon the counties for the men instead of the bounty, I must observe, the impossibility of pursuing at this time the design of the act of the army of reserve, which would put the whole scheme at a stand, and deprive the country of every benefit from provincial exertion. The right hon. Gentleman next adverted to the form and the situation of the public force; and many of his remarks were inapplicable, in this part of his speech, from his not being acquainted with what Ministers have done in this respect. The national regiments have been very much dispersed in the countries where the men have been raised. The men raised in Scotland have been introduced into the 42d and 92d regiments, and what is called the Cameronian regiment, the 26th; the Highlanders to the former, the Lowlanders to the latter. Those raised in Ireland have been assigned to the 18th, or Royal Irish regiment, and such others as were most convenient. The men who were considered least fit for service have been thrown into the battalions of reserve. As far as possible the men have been apportioned among their native regiments, and in the English regiments they have been very much divided, so that the names of the regiments and the counties in which the recruits were raised correspond. The plan hinted by the right hon. Gentleman, and followed with so much industry under the administration of Lord Shelburne, has been adopted as far as circumstances would conveniently admit; but the colonial connexions of this great maritime and commercial country, have obstructed, in a great degree, the measure. In the Austrian, German,

and Prussian States, it can be carried into execution with more punctuality, where it is not frustrated by exterior causes. The right hon. Gentleman next proceeded to his contrivance for maintaining the force he projected, and this, he said, was to be done by ballot; a ballot, it is true, *à la genevoise*, but still it was to be by ballot. If the individuals on whom the lot devolved would not serve, they were to pay a fine; but if they served they were to receive the same amount they would otherwise pay, as the reward of their compliance. The object of this proposal was to put an end to the competition; but I doubt very much if it would have that effect, or whether it would supersede the subscription clubs of which the right hon. Gentleman complained. I am confident nothing but an act of Parliament could prevent the latter, and, if it were enacted, I very much doubt its utility: it would occasion many afflicting examples of private distress, and answer no valuable purpose, perhaps, to countervail their disadvantage. The right hon. Gentleman says no one shall be selected as a substitute, but a person provided from the particular hundred to which the lot falls. It surely must be well known to many Members of this House, that this limitation would in many parts of the country be wholly impracticable. The other plan is feasible, which provides that no man shall be a substitute who does not belong to the county where the ballot takes effect, or in some adjacent district. It is, perhaps, a painful fact that we are constrained in many cases to have recourse for the principal scene of recruiting to the great manufacturing towns of Leeds, Halifax, Manchester, and others, which it would be eligible to reserve as much as possible for the regular supplies. Without entering more at large into the subject, what I have advanced will be sufficient to shew that the plan of the right hon. Gentleman, however it might be remotely and ultimately effectual, is not calculated to answer the prominent object, which is, to augment the army to a considerable extent in a very short space of time. On the contrary, the expedient to be submitted to the House is considered by the highest military authorities adequate to the completion of this important design. If it should be thought that we are too sanguine in the degree of success we anticipate, none will deny that in some degree the end will be obtained; and in proportion to this will be the capacity of his Majesty to apply the disposable force to offensive operations. I have troubled the House too long on a question which is reducible to so narrow a point; but it seemed improper

proper to leave the right hon. Gentleman's proposition wholly unanswered. On a question that regards the permanent system of the army, I may be very fit to enter fully into the merits of his plan, both in a partial and a collective view; but I have, at this time, reluctantly embarrassed the present inquiry with these considerations.

Mr. Pitt rose to explain an error into which the right hon. Secretary had fallen, as in the event of a difficulty from the locality of the levy it was provided for in his plan. In certain cases the bounty was given to the Colonel to procure the recruit, and all that was material to guard against was, that the bounty for the limited should not equal the remuneration for the unlimited service. This also was provided for.

Mr. Whitbread was glad that the right hon. Secretary, in answer to the right hon. Gentleman under the gallery, had condescended to explain, in some respects, the bill which he now proposed to offer to the consideration of the House. By the explanation, such as the right hon. Gentleman had been pleased to give, he had certainly justified the charge that had been so frequently brought against Ministers, that they had adopted no fixed or consistent plan in their operations. By the measure now intended he tells us that he means to suspend the army of reserve, as he calls it, though no misnomer could possibly be more glaring than the appellation applied to this species of force, as the result has proved. Have we not been repeatedly told in justification of the army of reserve, that it was one of the great means of recruiting the army? Have not comparative statements been given of the recruiting service at different periods; and have we not been told that the success of the recruiting service, such as it has been, has been owing to the army of reserve? Such are the advantages which that Gentleman has boasted of deriving from the army of reserve: and yet he now comes forward to suspend this act which he has formerly stated to be productive of so many advantages. He comes forward to remove, by this suspension, the pernicious effects of that competition which has been so often complained of, but which has never been will now admitted by the right hon. Gentleman. He could not, however, allow the acknowledgment of the right hon. Gentleman to be a sufficient answer to the objections offered to the present bill. He could not allow the acknowledgment of their past errors to be a sufficient proof of the capacity of Ministers to conduct the affairs of the country, particularly

particularly in such a crisis as the present : he would allow it to be a sufficient proof that they had no vigour nor consistency in their measures ; but he could never allow the perception of past errors, so long and so obstinately persisted in, and still professed to be adhered to in regard to principle, to be a proof of greater wisdom in new arrangements which were so closely connected with the former, that they must partake in a very considerable degree of their general complexion. The measure now proposed, does not go to abolish the army of reserve, which, if that system had been found inefficient, it ought to do ; but goes only to suspend for a time its operation. Either the army of reserve is a good or a bad system. If it is a good system and possessed of all the advantages which have been professed to be derived from it, why suspend it ? And if it is a bad system, and by creating an unfair competition, operates in hostility to the increase of the regular army, can any reason be given why it should not be totally repealed ? But Ministers perhaps are afraid to confess their weakness. They see at last the inconveniencies attending the present army of reserve system, but are reluctant to acknowledge in proper form the inutility of a system they have so often supported, and from which they have professed to derive so many advantages. They wish to abolish it therefore imperceptibly, and to avoid, under the pretence of a temporary suspension, the noise and eclat of a recantation. They wish to abolish it by a side wind, and at the expence of the people. As if the former system had not been sufficiently expensive, the present plan now proposed to be submitted to the House was no less calculated to empty the pockets of the people. That men could be raised in a short time upon any such system was an erroneous idea. In the counties with which he was acquainted, he could say, from his own observation, instead of raising the men in a short time, they were obliged to act illegally in order to raise them at all. Had they acted legally indeed, they would have neither found men nor money. But if it is now allowed that men cannot be raised by the army of reserve, which was formerly stated to possess so many advantages, and which is still allowed to be efficient, inasmuch as it is not intended to be repealed, to what quarter shall we apply for the supply of men required ? If Government has not been able to raise the necessary supply of men by the operation of the army of reserve act, how shall they be able to raise the men wanted, if the field is so exhausted as to render that act ineffectual ? If it was really necessary to go into a

Committee

Committee on this subject, it must be regarded as a proof, and a very undeniable proof—a proof which those gentlemen themselves recognise—that all former measures have been ineffectual. But if this be really the case, if the proper mode of augmenting our army be yet unascertained, upon what principle could the late motion of his hon. Friend (Mr. Fox) have been rejected? Did not that motion go to the adoption of vigorous and adequate measures, and to the correction of past inadvertencies? Was it not the design of that motion to employ the collective wisdom of the House in adopting measures suited to the exigencies of our present circumstances? But Ministers, by rejecting the offer, had declared the present system to be complete, and yet they came forward that night and stated it as necessary to go into a Committee on one of the most important departments of the service, and what was still more, placed this necessity on the very grounds urged by his hon. Friend in favour of his motion. Had that motion been carried they should now have been sitting as a Committee; not only for investigating the best means of augmenting the regular army, but the best means also of arranging and disposing of every species of our force. It would appear, therefore, from the arguments of those Gentlemen that night, that they did not reject the measure proposed by his hon. Friend, from a conviction of its impropriety; but merely to try their strength, and to ascertain whether it would be prudent for them to continue longer in their places. But now having ascertained that important point, they come forward and tell us, without reflecting a moment on their former arguments, that it will be proper to go into a Committee. There is certainly a gross relinquishment, both of principle and duty, not to call it by a worse name, in the conduct of the right hon. Gentleman this day. But if you do not allow them to carry this measure into effect, they will tell you, you may as well deny them the supply, for in the present circumstances the one grant is as necessary as the other. Without raising men, they tell us, it is impossible to go on, and it is no longer possible to raise men on the old system. It was for this very reason he was against the measure. If the army of reserve act was no longer useful, it ought to be repealed. He would therefore very willingly vote for its repeal; but would by no means encourage partial measures by voting its suspension, when upon the declaration of Ministers themselves, it ought to be entirely abolished. According to the statement so repeatedly made by Ministers, they

they intended the army of reserve as a supply for the regular army. This admission was allowed them, and they claimed no inconsiderable credit from it. If their statements then in this respect were true, why would they wantonly cut off those resources, and suspend a system which had for its principal object the supply of the regular army? A disposable force, and to a considerable amount, every man will allow to be necessary; any measure, therefore, for the increase of such a force, must meet with general approbation, though, at the same time, he, for one, should not wish to see any great disposable force put into their hands, from a conviction that they would be very ill qualified to make a proper use of it. But if the army of reserve act was calculated to create this disposable force, why suspend it, and if it had a contrary tendency, why not immediately repeal it? But in suspending the army of reserve act, they propose, it seems, to create a number of inspectors in the different districts. What consequences could be expected from such an arrangement? The Lord Lieutenants of the different counties are certainly sufficient for all the purposes intended by inspectors, and even in most cases better qualified than supervisors of any description. But the Gentlemen opposite, perhaps, wish at the present critical moment to create a greater number of places, and thus, independently of the general strength of the country, add at least to their own forces. Such an acquisition of strength was no doubt desirable, and at the present moment, perhaps, absolutely necessary. Inefficient, however, as the army of reserve act would now seem to be, its provisions had not been carried into execution, which was still a farther proof that Ministers were ill-qualified either to adopt new measures, or to carry existing ones into execution. They enacted without thought, and were equally anxious to suspend without reflection. By the army of reserve bill, they had required the quota of men to be raised at a certain time, or a fine to be imposed, should any county or district be deficient in their number. He should not say at present whether this provision was wise or not, but he was certain it had not, and perhaps could not, with any propriety be put into execution. In the county with which he was particularly connected, the number of men had not been found, but at the same time no fine had been imposed by the quarter sessions, as it was found the men could not be got. In reply to this, they will tell us most likely, they could not know the precise circumstances of the different counties, and might therefore,

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in some instances, overrate them. But had not they the same information which any Member of that House had, and were they not supposed to have more, as they had access to the aggregate information of the House, when they thought it necessary to call for it? Nor could he think at all more justifiable the mode now proposed of imposing the fine, not as the old one, but on the county at large; as, according to this provision, those who had exerted themselves in any such county would be liable, and would, in fact, be subjected to the fine, as well as those who had not raised a single man. That such an arrangement would be unfair, required no demonstration. But another material objection he had to the measure arose from the idea, that should a man be balloted, and not have actually joined his corps before this bill passed, he shall be obliged not to find a substitute, whatever arrangements he may have made for that purpose, but a certain sum of money, or to serve in person. Would it be consistent, would it be suitable to the wisdom of Parliament to make the man, in such circumstances, find the money, when he might more conveniently find a substitute—when to find the one might be possible, and the other perhaps wholly impracticable? But suppose you demand 20*l.* as the price of his exemption? Ah, says the ballotted man, this is a vast sum, and exempts me only for a year, I will not consent to it. But, says the Government, if you will consent to pay more, it will exempt you for five years; and what is still more, from the militia also. What then must be the consequence of such measures? You thus cut up not only the army of reserve, but also the militia, and in the end will lock up the force of the country. Upon the whole, he would vote for delaying this measure at all events, that the right hon. Gentleman under the gallery (Mr. Pitt), might have time to bring forward his measure, which promised as a whole to be more satisfactory. He would therefore give his vote that the Speaker should not leave the chair. In regard to the plans proposed by that right hon. Gentleman, the present was not the time to go into them, even so far as he had explained himself. From the answer, however, of the right hon. Secretary to those plans, so far as they had been explained, it was very obvious that they ought to be discussed before the passing of this bill, as the measure in contemplation of the right hon. Gentleman held out advantages which we have not derived from any of the measures hitherto adopted, and even more than this bill even professed to be calculated to give. He did not by any means conceive that the mode of ballot suggested by the

right hon. Gentleman could be attended with any inconvenience. It would not necessarily cut off our recourse to great manufacturing towns for the recruiting service. While others would be more productive, those sources also would be left equally open as at present. The right hon. Secretary, he thought, had not sufficiently explained how the battalions he had mentioned were to be officered, as there must be an influx of officers as well as men. The right hon. Gentleman, by prescribing the period in which the number of men were to be raised for the purpose of procuring rank, had defeated, in a great measure, the object of this arrangement; but it would still appear more ridiculous, when it was recollected, that they were not only obliged to raise them within a given time, but not permitted also to give them more than a certain specified bounty. The Ministers by such means were certainly cutting the throat of their own plan. If a man is limited to a certain time, he must necessarily give the greater bounty. If you, therefore, tie up his hands in both respects, you go very far indeed to prevent any reasonable hopes of success. The hon. Gentleman then adverted to the subscription clubs that had been noticed by both the preceding speakers. In many respects, he acknowledged, he was against ballotting for men altogether; but in some instances also, he would admit it to be expedient. In agricultural counties particularly, Gentlemen from the country must know, that there would be great inconveniences without a system of this description. The hon. Gentleman concluded by giving his negative to the motion for the Committee, on the principle, that if the bill passes, the army of reserve act can no longer exist; that a repeal, therefore, was more proper than a suspension, and that the measure intended to be brought forward by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Pitt) was entitled to a previous discussion.

The *Secretary at War* thought that the arguments of the hon. Gentleman opposite him could not, by any fair and dispassionate observer, be supposed in the least to militate against the provisions of the bill. One argument of his was, that the measure was not calculated to produce men, but money. Unless he considered that as an *argumentum ad hominem*, instead of the *argumentum ad rem*, he thought it could not possibly be considered as any argument at all; for in a subsequent part of that hon. Member's speech, he submitted that, of 40,000 men which it had been proposed to raise by that bill, there were now actually raised and embodied to the full amount of 30,000 men; and it was admitted on all hands, that

that of all the measures for the increase of our military strength, the army of reserve had procured the largest possible number to our disposable force. Neither himself nor any of his right hon. Friends wished to contend that it would by no means injure the general recruiting for the line; on the contrary, they only said that it did not put a stop to the general levy for extensive service, but admitted that it must, as all levies for limited service must, tend *pro tanto* to diminish the recruiting for the regulars. He had objected in such general terms that while he condemned the operation of that act, he censured Ministers for bringing forward any thing like a repeal of the law which he seemed to think obnoxious. He did not positively say which of the two he thought was best. Ministers, however, had not adopted either; they had taken a middle course; and only moved for a temporary suspension of the law, until the recruiting for other services should be completed. In his objections to the measure of suspension in itself, he had given it the mild title of a bill of false pretences. He could not see the propriety of the application of such an epithet. In this branch of his argument he seemed particularly to refer to the mode of raising money, which was provided for by the bill. When some of the counties in the west of England, for instance, had exerted themselves with the greatest alacrity, and perhaps with some degree of success, and had completed almost the whole of their quota, would any Gentleman stand up and say that it was an act of justice to put them on the same footing with other counties which had not displayed a similar cheerfulness of spirit, or raised a proportionate number of men? The hon. Gentleman had also denied the inconvenience which must result to the House from a consideration of the two measures, that of the bill which was now before the House, and that of the proposition which had been made by a right hon. Gentleman under the gallery. He confessed that for his part he plainly saw that great inconvenience must arise from the circumstance of entertaining two questions of that nature at the same time. The one was for a temporary suspension of an act already established, and which must be considered as a matter of experiment. The other was for the adoption of a new measure, which was so extensive in itself, and so ample in its detail, as to form sufficient grounds for the introduction of a new bill, which would require the most serious deliberation of the House. A particular provision in the bill he had regarded as a job. But really he could not see how

any thing like a job could be likely to be made of such a regulation. The counties that were particularly deficient in the supply of their quota of men, were to be made subject to the penal provisions of the former statute. To ascertain the sum which they were to pay for such a deficiency or neglect, it was necessary to make inquiries of different persons, no one of whom could have within himself the power of making a complete return from his own knowledge. Some might be dead, or others might have deserted between the time of their being raised by the parish district, and the time at which it was expected that they had entered on real military duty; others might have been discharged after they had been sent to join their regiments. For this purpose, he thought that it was absolutely necessary that some gentlemen of respectability should be appointed to a service which was so essential to the public interest, and so diversified in its functions. There was one question to which the hon. Gentleman appeared to attach the greatest importance—that was the payment of fines by the county at large. He evidently considered that the law was intended to be the same in that respect as the militia laws. In the militia the deficiencies were to be reckoned as so much fine upon the county, it was true. The army of reserve act also levied the penalty on the county in the first instance; but it provided that the money should be afterwards eventually paid by the parish which was deficient. The hon. Gentleman had stated some objections also to the instructions to officers, who had to raise a certain number of men for a certain rank in the army. That might be made a separate question, no doubt, if any hon. Member should think fit so to do; but it surely had no connexion with the immediate question, namely, the House going into a Committee on the army of reserve suspension bill. As to the justice of the case, considered on the score of propriety, raising a certain number of men within six months, that was an object for the officers themselves to look to when they saw the instructions. If they thought the length of time was not of sufficient duration, they could very easily avoid entering into such an engagement. The instructions, however, were not so rigidly adhered to, as totally to preclude Ministers from extending the period in which any given number of men was to be raised, according as the circumstances of the case might warrant. If it appeared upon the whole that the army of reserve act stood in the way of those levies, or the general recruiting for our disposable force, that circumstance could not be fairly urged as

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an argument against the suspension of the bill. It surely must be considered as an act of justice to these gentlemen, to remove an obstacle which stood in the way of their raising their quantity of men within the period limited; and above all, it must be a measure of the greatest utility at the present moment, to suspend the operation of any measure which in the smallest degree tended to lessen the general recruiting for our armies. In a very populous district in the country, he knew it for a fact, that persons in but moderate circumstances had paid 20*l.* sooner than enter into the army of reserve as substitutes, which they might have done at the time and have received 40*l.* He by no means wished to state that these objections were generally to be met with, but it was sufficient to shew that some temporary suspension of the law was necessary. The proposition of the right hon. Gentleman could only be deemed at present a matter of experiment. Considering the present measure in the same point of view, it most certainly was entitled to some claim of priority; and the House would recollect at the same time, that nothing was now intended to be done which would totally destroy the good effects of the army of reserve act, but that the measure was brought forward as the means of accelerating the increase of our disposable force. If any other system was to be adopted, it might be the object of future discussion, without interrupting the progress of the present bill.

Mr. Fox, after all he had heard on a former day, as to the necessity of a thorough discussion of the present bill, was surprised to find that it had not yet been thought necessary to enter into any explanation of the necessity of it. He had not heard a single word in support of the bill; but its supporters had confined themselves to a general recommendation and imperfect description of its features. On Friday last they were not prepared to enter into its merits, and now the House was to understand that they must wait till another stage for any satisfaction on the subject. The framers of the army of reserve bill, at its first adoption, found it a measure next in efficacy to the philosopher's stone. The suspension of it, the House was now called on to believe, would do great wonders; and, there was little doubt, the revival of it would be a call on their credulity to a still more unbounded extent. It was not, however, his wish to keep Gentlemen to their promises of a former day. He argued, that sufficient unto the day was the folly thereof. It was said that the bill had exhausted at present all

all its force; as if they had been told of a horse that his strength was exhausted, that he was fatigued; but let him sleep, and he would speedily recover; or like a pump-well, out of which no water can be drawn, because the works are out of repair. No, these are not the reasons assigned. But Ministers say, "Stop—this water has got so low, that you cannot pump out of it 10,000 men at present; but wait till the water is restored, and then you may pump out of it more men." Another mode, however, has been proposed by the right hon. Gentleman under the gallery (Mr. Pitt). But what do Ministers say to it? "Let us try our measure before yours. We have gone on as far as could be gained in the way of a limited force. As we cannot carry it further, let us try if we cannot succeed better in an attempt at an unlimited service. As we cannot get more men to consent to serve in Great Britain, let us try if we may not induce others to extend their services beyond it."—Preposterous, indeed, and contrary to all order, and to every idea of common understanding, was it to suppose, that having exhausted the more easy and less extensive species of service, they could then, without any improvement, without any favourable alteration of circumstances, expect greater success in the more difficult and more extended service. They represented the act authorizing the army of reserve as an act which had done more than any other measure could have done. If it had failed them, how could they expect that a less efficient plan was to be crowned with greater success? What hopes could they have of success in any shape, when this most successful of all measures had failed them? The plain answer was, because by giving rank to the officers, you opened the door for giving higher bounties than were given in any other service whatever. The limitation of time for raising the number of men to entitle an officer to his additional rank, so far from operating as a check on this practice, would, he was convinced, as his hon. Friend (Mr. Whitbread) had already noticed, prove an additional encouragement to the increase of such bounties. Rank was the great aim of officers who would undertake to raise men in this manner, and having made up their complement nearly to the number agreed on, there was little doubt, that sooner than sacrifice their object, they would give any bounty, even to the extent specified by his hon. Friend. But Ministers said, the suspension of the army of reserve would do much good. All that it could possibly do, he and his friends had already stated,

stated, nay had enforced on the consideration of Ministers. He and many other hon. Gentlemen in that House, had often enforced the necessity of removing the bounties, and thereby affording facility to recruiting the regular army. This, however, which was unquestionably the great object held out by the suspension of the act, they had delayed till the latest possible moment; and now that it was proposed, he did not see that it would have, to any extent, the effect intended. The right hon. Gentleman under the gallery had detailed a plan which unquestionably deserved every serious and attentive consideration. When brought forward in a regular manner, he had no doubt that it would be greatly calculated to answer the object in view. His object would then be more intelligible, and though he (Mr. Fox) had not been able to follow the whole of the right hon. Gentleman's statements and provisions, he had no doubt, from many things which did meet with his approbation, in what fell from the right hon. Gentleman, that the measure proposed by him would be infinitely superior to the present system. Ministers, however, asked why the plan of the right hon. Gentleman, which they seemed also to think might be advantageously employed, was not introduced at some after period? Why, the right hon. Gentleman had formed his measure on the plan of the army of reserve bill, which it was his object to improve and render efficient. The Ministers, in the meantime, push on the suspension of this, at one time their favourite act. They attempt to do away the very measure which it is the object of the right hon. Gentleman's intended motion to improve, and which by his attention and ability might be rendered of infinite advantage. They do not wish to afford him an opportunity of trying the effect of his measure in the House of Commons, but think it sufficient if he have it in his power to print his bill, and to publish his sentiments, as a speech *intended* to be spoken in that House. He agreed with the right hon. Gentleman in thinking that in the case of ballots it might be fit to give a bounty to the person balloted to serve, provided he were willing to serve personally. But, says the right hon. Secretary of State, "We have tried the experiment. We have in particular counties offered large bounties as an inducement, but without effect." Is the right hon. Secretary, however, certain that if the penalties and bounties were limited in the manner proposed by the right hon. Gentleman; is he certain that, if the nature and endurance of the service were totally different, similar instances would

would occur? But, again, says the right hon. Secretary of State, at least clubbing must be done away. The hon. Gentleman declared that he did not know on what ground subscriptions could be supposed to prevent the acceptance of bounties. If the law could be rendered effective and the penalties limited, he could not see how clubs could be enabled or could wish to pay great bounties more than individuals. He certainly approved greatly of ballots, and thought that clubs, so far from operating against the act, were highly meritorious. Was it consistent in an act of parliament to prescribe that people might pay 5*l.* each for exemption, but that four or more of them should not be allowed to toss up who should pay for the whole? Now what objection could be urged against postponing the going into the Committee? If they did so, they would have two plans before them on which to choose. The plan of the right hon. Gentleman had not at all been replied to, but it had been stated that it would more properly become the subject of consideration when the state of defence of the country was before them. His hon. Friend (Mr. Whitbread) had properly asked them, why then they had objected to go into a Committee on that subject? Their answer seemed to be, the time would come when such a question might be discussed, but this was not the moment; Ministers did not wish yet to be removed; they must die, but not just now; some time hence would be equally agreeable to them. If the right hon. Secretary of State thought the plan of the right hon. Gentleman a proper subject for discussion along with the state of defence of the country, how could the proposing a Committee on that subject be attributed to him as a plan for dismissing Ministers? The point at present was, whether the House should proceed on the plan of the right hon. Gentleman, or that of Ministers, as the most likely to be of a rational nature? The plans of Ministers, so excellent as they had at first esteemed them, they had held out to that House as unconscious what to make of them, first in their right hand, then in their left, according as it occurred to them either to approve or disapprove of their own measures. Whenever they attempted to approve one mode, they in every instance did so at the expence of the destruction of another. If the right hon. Gentleman succeeded in the present question, the effect of the delay applied for by the right hon. Gentleman would be not to destroy the reserve act, but to prop it. His only doubt was, whether the delay ought not to be longer than a fortnight. But if Ministers

Ministers thought that any thing could be made of their own measure, the best mode undoubtedly would be to delay it, and to see if they could not ingraft upon it the plan proposed by the right hon. Gentleman, unless, indeed, they thought that there was something supernatural in their powers; that they possessed something in the nature of conjurors, which should induce them to try first one experiment then another. The hon. Gentleman concluded by giving his hearty assent to the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman.

Lord Castlereagh, after remarking on the tendency of the discussions of that House to elevate the feelings and intelligence of the country, however the repetition of them, particularly upon the same subject, might try the patience of the Members, proceeded to reply to the arguments of the hon. Gentleman on the other side—arguments which were in perfect unison with what the hon. Gentleman had uniformly maintained since the commencement of the war; although, he must observe, not quite so consistent with the general principle of his political code. The partiality he of late professed for a regular army, and the desire he manifested for the augmentation of it beyond any former precedent, was certainly not reconcilable with the sentiments he on many occasions professed to hold: but without dwelling further on the conduct of the hon. Member, he begged leave to take notice of the charge of inconsistency which had been made against Ministers, in consequence of their admission, in the course of the debate, that the strongest reason which induced them to propose the suspension of the army of reserve bill was, lest it should interfere with the recruiting of the new levies proposed to be raised. Upon this he wished gentlemen to remember, that at the time this bill was originally proposed, Ministers did never say, that it would not interfere, in its execution, with the recruiting for the regular army; but they distinctly maintained, that such interference with the recruiting would be more than counterbalanced by the number of men which the bill would procure for the defence of the country, and in a way much more expeditious than by any other which could be devised. The hon. Gentleman had asked, why had not Ministers commenced with the plan now proposed of raising new regiments? To this he would answer, that it was deemed much wiser to fill up the old regiments first, and that that filling up had been accomplished by the operation of the army of reserve act. The policy of this mode of proceeding he was happy to recollect; and he felt

strong in the reflection that it was supported by the opinion and authority of his right hon. Friend under the gallery (Mr. Pitt). If it should be asked, why an act which had been productive of such a result should now be suspended? he would mention, because its capacity of production had ceased, and its further continuance might much embarrass the progress of the regular recruiting, without doing any adequate benefit. Ministers never meditated the introduction of the bill before the House, until they had made every effort to render it as efficient as it was possible to render it—until they had twice appealed to the Lords Lieutenants of counties to accelerate its success, and to promote the ballot. After waiting to ascertain the final result of this appeal, and making every exertion, Ministers now came to that House, and confessing that no farther accession of force could now be drawn from this resource, they called on the House for a suspension of the bill, until another plan for raising men should be fully tried. As to the amendment, he should only state, that the plan of his right hon. Friend under the gallery being so extended, and embracing so completely the whole organization of our public forces, he thought that it would require more time to examine its details and decide upon its practicability than the amendment proposed to grant, while he was of opinion that such a postponement would impede the other means in the contemplation of Government for the augmentation of the regular army. Perceiving, therefore, no good that could result from the delay, while the mischief was obvious, he could not persuade himself to concur in the motion of his right hon. Friend, to whose recollection he wished to call his own conduct, with respect to a plan much less complicated than that he submitted to the House that evening, namely, that of the supplementary militia. When his right hon. Friend proposed that, he must remember the time granted for the investigation of it before its final adoption was proposed, and he must be aware that it required not by any means so much time to determine upon it as the important and extensive project which he had just detailed to the House. Would he then wish to leave the bill before the House hanging on the skirts of the regular recruiting, until this project should undergo such a full discussion, which could not in all probability take place within the sessions. The army of reserve act had, it was true, produced 35,000 soldiers for the country; but it was no less true, that it was not likely to produce two thousand more by the usual balloting, if suffered to continue,

tinue, although it would do considerable injury to the recruiting. With many parts of the plan of his right hon. Friend he had no hesitation in saying that he perfectly agreed; upon others he entertained doubts, in common, he believed, with many hon. Members, whose opinions were entitled to respectful consideration. At all events, the frame of the plan was such as must undergo much deliberation, and should not, of course, be put in competition with a measure that was pressing in point of time. Whether it would be wise to reduce the militia from the present number to 40,000 men, he was not prepared to say; but he was fully persuaded, that although that body might be allowed gradually to waste itself to the standard mentioned, no sudden reduction should take place; at least no reduction should be attempted until provision should be made for an adequate increase in some other branch of our force. This measure, however, with the order respecting the recruiting for particular regiments in particular districts, might be hereafter considered, and need not at all interfere with the progress of the measure before the House. The hon. Member on the opposite bench had accused Ministers of always confining their attention to a particular mode of defence, rejecting every idea that differed from it; always debating about militia and volunteers, and neglecting the regulars. Such a charge, he maintained, was unfounded; but the hon. Gentleman could certainly, with the utmost justice, apply the charge of perseverance in a particular opinion to the hon. Gentleman on the lower bench (Mr. Windham), for his perseverance was such as never relaxed to experience, and would not yield to argument. If Ministers were to be abused because they did not imitate such conduct, if they were to be reproached with the want of system, because they did not in every instance act up to their own opinions, he had no objection to participate of such reproach. They had provided a quantum of force of every description that was necessary either for the purpose of domestic safety; or for formidable offensive operations, whenever such operations should appear to be expedient; and if in the legislative measures, which preceded the collection of this force, they had not pertinaciously adhered to their own ideas, but had agreed to modify their propositions upon the suggestions of others—had evinced an anxiety to accommodate the nature of their plans to the opinions of those Members who were entitled to attention, and thus exposed themselves to censure—it was a censure which no

one of them or their friends could be ashamed to meet. And yet, in truth, this mode of proceeding on the part of Ministers constituted the ground of what was so often termed a want of system. Let their measures, however, be judged of by their practical result, and he was confident that whatever minor criticism those measures might meet with either in their original formation or execution, they would be found to have collected and arranged an amount of force far exceeding in number and quality any that ever was in existence in the annals of this country. It might, indeed, be alleged, that a similar crisis had never before arisen; but yet he would put it to the candour of the House and the public, whether, under all the circumstances, the collection of such a body of force did not entitle Ministers to the highest praise? It was a force, he remarked, which far exceeded any that existed at any period of the last war, when, though the motive operating on the public mind was not quite so great, he contended the necessity was quite as urgent, and the exertions of the then Ministers were extended to their utmost power. The noble Lord added, that he had no fear as to the issue of an appeal to the judgment of fair, dispassionate people, upon the manner in which Ministers had contrived and executed their measures for the defence of the country.

Sir James Pulteney dwelt upon the superior efficiency of a regular army to the militia or any other description of force. The militia he wished to be reduced, for he was convinced that, whatever the men might be, the officers who commanded such corps were not such as were likely to render them an effective force; and they were at present too numerous to be at all properly officered. He rejoiced in the amount of the different descriptions of our public force, but he begged it to be understood, that we should rely for our security rather on the goodness than on the number of our troops. The hon. Baronet remarked upon the most effectual means of defending London, stating that, from the present distribution of our force, 150,000 men could be assembled in a very short time for the defence of this city, in the event of invasion; and concluded with recommending that some plan should be devised of inducing a transfer of so much of the militia to the regular army as should reduce the former to 40,000 men.

Mr. Windham expressed the satisfaction he felt to find his opinion as to the policy of reducing the militia, seconded by an authority so respectable as that of the hon. Officer who

who had just sat down, and his right hon. Friend who proposed the amendment. It was an opinion which he had long since declared in that House, and it was among many opinions which he had heard highly centured at the time they were originally mentioned, but which afterwards made their way and were adopted even by their former censors. With respect to the bill before the House, he confessed that it was of such a nature that, whether the object were to continue, to modify, to suspend, or to repeal it, he could not give it his entire approbation. If it could be made out that men could not be had by any other means than by the ballots acted upon under this bill, then the case would be otherwise, and the continuance of it might be an advisable measure. But if it was asserted that though it had produced a certain number of men, it could produce no more, why then was it not repealed? As it was not even insinuated that it would produce any more men, the mere suspension of the measure struck his mind as the most unreasonable way of disposing of it. The noble Lord had boasted of the accommodating spirit of Ministers; that they had occasionally yielded to different principles and systems, and that to protect themselves from being condemned by any party, they alternately acquiesced in the recommendations of each; but in the instance of the bill before the House they seemed disposed to take a middle course—neither to abolish an act which was complained of, and justly, as tending to injure the recruiting for the regular army, by high bounties, &c. nor to continue that which other Gentlemen stated to be the best mode of providing men. No, Ministers resolved that this army of reserve act should be suspended; that it should neither live nor die; but that it should remain as a kind of ghost, and to remain like other ghosts *in terrorem*, for the purpose of extorting money (*a laugh*). No one could be satisfied with the purpose of Ministers, and the public must be particularly discontented. It would involve a considerable injustice, for it was not proposed to make any distinction between the districts which had furnished their quotas to the army of reserve, and those which had not; and it was still farther objectionable, as it would interfere with the plan of his right hon. Friend who proposed the amendment. This bill of suspension was liable to another objection, which would not altogether apply to a proposition of repeal, namely, that it would keep alive the memory and encourage the hope of large bounties, an evil than which nothing could so materially injure any plan of recruiting

cruiting for the regular army. What Ministers proposed to gain from the future renewal of this bill, compared with this obvious loss, he could not imagine. But suppose they were determined to persist in the bill before the House, what argument of any force could they offer, against the delay proposed by the mover of the amendment, in order that he might have time fully to prepare the measure he had announced his intention of proposing in the Committee on this bill; a measure which possibly might be such as even the supporters of the bill would be disposed, upon examination, to give way to? If the motion submitted by his hon. Friend on Monday last had been acceded to, the plan described in the course of this evening by the right hon. the Mover of the amendment, might have been, with every other proposition connected with the defence of the country, discussed in the Committee, which it was the object of that motion to institute, and there would have been no reason for pressing this amendment; but Ministers, by opposing the former, had rendered the latter necessary, in order to examine the project of his right hon. Friend under the gallery. In some parts of this plan, as he understood it from his right hon. Friend, he agreed, and of others he entertained his doubts; but those doubts arose in part from this circumstance, that he took a different view of the subject, and that he agreed entirely with his hon. Friend (Mr. Fox), with respect to the plan of our defence. His opinion decidedly was, that the country should trust to a regular army principally; and, in addition to that, to what was termed an armed peasantry. This regular army, he was convinced, could find more than enough of recruits, to advance it to any necessary number if the impediments were removed which had been thrown in its way by the measures of Ministers. Of this sentiment he was satisfied, that notwithstanding all the various employments which our manufactures and agriculture furnished, sufficient recruits could be obtained without prejudice to either, and that our army might be rendered formidable in numbers and respectable in character, particularly if the idea were adopted, which he had often mentioned in that House, and which the best military authorities recommend, of raising men for a limited period of service; for a certain term of years. The right hon. Gentleman repeated his recommendation, that the postponement required by the hon. Mover of the amendment should be acceded to. The authority of his right hon. Friend entitled his wish to the compliance of Ministers, and to the assent

assent of the House, especially seeing that no sensible inconvenience could result from the delay he required; seeing also, that in the Committee there would be an opportunity of fully canvassing the nature of his right hon. Friend's plan, to ascertain how far it could be engrafted on the stock of the army of reserve bill. It appeared to him, that it would be an injustice to his right hon. Friend to resist his motion for delay, and the House should concur in the amendment, if it were only on this principle, that his right hon. Friend was at least proposing something against nothing—that he was endeavouring to check in their meanderings, those Ministers who were perpetually opposing themselves—the ends of whose measures came jolting against each other; those Ministers who were continually wheeling to and fro like drunken men—who in one measure generally counteracted another, as the line of argument they adopted on one day, frequently refuted that which they pursued on the preceding; always investigating, never decided: there was scarcely one measure they resorted to that did not involve a renunciation of their former opinions, and an adoption of those they had opposed. It might be now said by Ministers, that they knew at the time the army of reserve bill was enacted, that it would very much injure the recruiting for the regular army; that they were aware of the evil it would produce; but why did not they say so then? No, on the contrary, they denied it; and now that the consequences were felt, they used a different language. They insisted that they foresaw, but they studiously concealed their foresight; and they reprobated those who ventured to prophecy that which they themselves were now forced to confess. They who foretold those things were described by Ministers as mere theorists; and it was asserted that the practical effects would be found to refute their ideas; but who were found to be mistaken? The attempt made in this, as well as in other instances, to put down the opinions held by the hon. Gentlemen with whom he acted, had only served to corroborate and justify those opinions; like certain plants, the more it was attempted to crush them, the more they prospered and grew. Recurring to the nature of Mr. Pitt's plan, the right hon. Gentleman contrasted some of its parts, particularly that respecting the regulation of bounties, with the provisions of the army of reserve act. The latter he contended had ceased to produce more men, not for the reasons stated, not because there were no more men to be had—for if that were the case, why expect to raise more by any

any other measure? No, in point of fact, the army of reserve act has met the fate that ever attends measures that are too rigorous: as it happens with penal laws, when they become too severe they lose their effect, no person being willing to execute them; so with the army of reserve act—it was so odious that no officer could be found to put it into execution. The people were adverse to it, the stomach of the country loathed it, and this was the cause of its failure. That failure, therefore, should not induce any apprehension that plenty of men were not to be had for the regular army, if the recruiting were to be unimpeded and properly conducted. The right hon. Gentleman adverted to the frequent mention made by Ministers of the gross amount of our public force—of the number of men in arms; but he would ask them, could they seriously mean to urge that as a claim to merit on their part? Were they aware that they were by such mention pronouncing their own condemnation? for they had contrived by their conduct to put the country in such a state of desperation, that every man was forced to feel the necessity of struggling for his own protection; and in truth, independently of the impulse of patriotism, the alarming state of the country was such as to suggest to men the propriety of coming forward for the safety of their own lives, their family and property. Such had been the effect, and Ministers, therefore, instead of talking of 400,000 men ready to stand forth for the country, might speak of so many millions—of, in fact, every man capable of contributing any assistance to avert the public danger: but were they who created the danger, and who were incapable of directing the spirit it called forth, to repel, much less to destroy it, entitled to lay claim to merit? Certainly not. The noble Lord had stated that Ministers had resorted to plans calculated to please all parties, and that they now said “Gentlemen, you have no right to complain, for we have given you all sorts of measures, (*a laugh*) and specimens of all sorts of systems.” But then, added the right hon. Gentleman, it did not follow that because Ministers gave variety, that therefore they should satisfy; for though there might be good and bad in variety, it might happen that the whole of the variety would be bad—and so it did with respect to the measures of Ministers; and the noble Lord and his colleagues seemed to think the most appropriate conclusion for this variety was, the inconsistency manifested in the introduction of the bill before the House. The right hon. Gentleman concluded with strongly recommending the adoption of

of the amendment, in order that his right hon. Friend's plan might be examined; to see whether upon so bad a stock as the army of reserve act, any thing efficient could be grafted. At all events, he was persuaded that nothing was likely to be worse.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer—Sir, I will detain the House but for a very short time. The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, has alluded to some opinions thrown out by an hon. General on the same side of the House, with respect to the militia; to the extent of which, although I do not fully subscribe, yet I think it in some measure necessary to advert to them, for the purpose of shewing that they are not precisely of that stamp and character described by the right hon. Gentleman on the floor. That hon. General, in speaking of the militia, admitted that they were an excellent description of military force, but at the same time asserted, that for active military operations they could bear no comparison with the regular army. The right hon. Gentleman on the many occasions that he has alluded to that part of our national defence, has described it as insufficient, unmilitary, and ridiculous, (*a loud cry of No! no!*) at least such was my conception of what he then said, and I am confident I am not singular in my opinion. Now, Sir, with regard to the present measure, what does that right hon. Gentleman do? why, he objects to the postponement of it, for no other reason that I can collect from his long speech, but that he wishes for its repeal. Other Gentlemen, and a very considerable number I fear, object to it upon grounds more consistent than that of the right hon. Gentleman, and his particular friends; but I trust that a little consideration of the subject will remove from their minds much of the doubt they entertain with regard to it. What is the object of the suspension of the army of reserve act? Why, Sir, it embraces that most desirable of all objects; that object in the promotion of which men of all parties have concurred, the augmentation of our regular army. The right hon. Gentleman has frequently disapproved of the operation of that act, as affecting the regular recruiting of the army; I will not go the length of saying, that it does not interfere in some respects with it, but I can never admit that it impedes it to the extent that is asserted by him. The country has experienced very great advantages from the adoption of that act, and the subsequent operation of it. The right hon. Gentleman has even the candour to avow it. It has produced to the country more than 37,000 men, among which is to be

reckoned a disposable body of 12,000. These advantages it is our wish to continue to the country, and we think we cannot better arrive at that desirable end, than by a temporary suspension of what has ceased to produce the effects that it was originally formed for. My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State, wrote officially to the Lord Lieutenants to encourage the purposes of that act; and notwithstanding all the recommendation it received from them, notwithstanding the spirit and disposition of the magistrates in every part of the kingdom, to give it all the aid and advancement in their power, ever since the month of November last, the inconveniencies resulting from it have by far exceeded the advantages; although previous to that period the benefit derived to the country from its operation, out-balanced considerably its disadvantages, which I admit were neither few nor unimportant. It was not originally a measure of choice with his Majesty's Government; but it was forced on them by the peculiar circumstances of the country. The immense number of volunteers, amounting to no less than 400,000 men; the 200,000 that were drawn from our population for the recruiting of the army and navy, rendered it an act of necessity—of urgent inevitable necessity; and such a measure as never would be resorted to but under the pressure of that necessity. I shall not attempt to follow the right hon. Gentleman above me (Mr. Pitt), through all the details of the complicated plan he has opened to you, but I have one considerable, and to my mind, decisive objection to offer to it, and that is, that it tends to the creation of a great and permanent military establishment. I for one will never give my consent for placing a great portion of the community under the control and inspection of officers, who, however individually respectable, should not be vested with the power and the opportunity of continually teasing and soliciting the persons under their control, to engage for general service. There were also other causes which lately impeded the recruiting service. The time was happily unfavourable to it; I say happily, because the cheapness of provisions removed that necessity to seek for subsistence, that the lower classes of society always experience in time of scarcity; and the 200,000 men that were enrolled into the army and navy, left scarcely a disposable person in the country. As to that part of the plan, which proposes the connecting of regiments with particular counties, although I always speak with diffidence on military matters, yet I am obliged to dissent from it, because not sufficiently taking into consideration the

the varieties of character of the different manufacturing, agricultural, and commercial counties, I think it is likely to produce extreme inconvenience, and scarcely one practical advantage. Upon the whole, I can discover nothing in the plan to induce me to give my consent to defer the present measure. Now, Sir, much has been said by the right hon. Gentleman on the floor, and by those who co-operate with him, respecting the spontaneous zeal which has been manifested by the country, so much to its honour, and I trust as much to its advantage. My noble Friend has well explained what our sentiments on that subject are. He has said, and truly said, that the zeal of the country was a voluntary aid afforded to the Government at a critical period; and that the only merit that Government claimed, was that of having given a beneficial direction to a great public principle. The zeal of the country, I confess, has amply conferred on Ministers the means of providing for our domestic defence. But was it that spontaneous zeal, which enabled Government to hold in blockade every one of the enemy's ports, from the Texel to the Adriatic? Was it that spontaneous zeal, which enabled the Executive Government to effect greater conquests within the first six months of the war, than have been achieved in almost the same number of campaigns in former wars? That zeal I will acknowledge, and acknowledge with gratitude, has given us that description of force which that right hon. Gentleman holds cheap, the hearts and hands of 400,000 volunteers; but at the same time I will take the liberty to say, that zeal has not given us all the means that have been so successfully applied in maintaining the honour and the interests of the empire. The right hon. Gentleman has often dwelt on the necessity of promoting the recruiting service. But does he, can he suppose, that is to be accomplished by one mode only? Would he have been satisfied with the result of the means suggested by that? I am persuaded he would not. The hon. Gentleman well knows that it requires various measures to draw out the population of the country, and to induce a change in its habits; that the means which have been successful at one time, may cease to operate in the same way; and, therefore, that of necessity different means must be resorted to. At present this country possesses a greater military force than any in the world, and much greater, I am happy to say, than the enemy we have most to apprehend from can oppose to us. That force would never have existed to the extent that it does, if it was not diversified.

fied. The army of reserve ~~at~~ has operated a sufficient length of time; no present advantages result from it; and I therefore think it would be judicious to try what the temporary suspension of it may do, towards increasing the disposable force of the country.

Mr. Gunning declared that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman who spoke last, appeared to him to have totally altered the grounds on which the House was called to vote; or that his colleagues had unintentionally disclosed what their real motives were, for resisting the plan of his right hon. Friend. Others have treated it with some degree of respect, with some shew of decorum, and have admitted, that at another time it may be proper to extend to it some little consideration; but the right hon. Gentleman considers it as mischievous in its nature, and has endeavoured to hold it up to Parliament, and to the country, as a measure the most odious and tyrannical, and as one bearing the shew of providing for the public defence, by means contrary to the constitution. That right hon. Gentleman has endeavoured to represent, or misrepresent it, as a complete subversion of the principle, and deviation from the practice, by which ballots for limited service have been hitherto made. The right hon. Gentleman, in opposing the plan of his right hon. Friend, has said, that he will not expose a great part of the community to be tortured and solicited to enlist for foreign service; he who, not a fortnight ago, in the very teeth and face of the principle he had just laid down, supported a bill for enabling his Majesty to accept the voluntary offers of service of the Irish militia, and to procure which there must have been some teasing and solicitation, for the returns would shew that there was far from unanimity in the different regiments, as to the prudence or expediency of such offers. The principle of volunteering was fully acquiesced in by him, when a favourite measure depending on it was to be carried; but when a plan is brought in by his right hon. Friend, which is to be canvassed and examined, and new moulded by Parliament, then it is to be resisted *in limine*, because, forsooth, it would subject a great portion of his Majesty's subjects to be teased and solicited to volunteer for unlimited service. Could there be a more gross, monstrous and unblushing violation of every principle of consistency or parliamentary decorum? His noble Friend on the bench below him, had excused himself for not consenting to the introduction of the plan at this moment, by saying, that the consideration of it might

might be advisable at another period, and that as he wished to have two strings to his bow, he probably would not be averse from entertaining it then. He wished the noble Lord to preserve the two strings to his bow; and he hoped the time would come, and come shortly, when he would support the plan of his right hon. Friend in all its details, with all the zeal that he now opposed it. The plan of his right hon. Friend was but the foundation whereon he proposed to erect a solid and permanent system of defence; and that foundation the right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues were anxious, not barely to undermine, but totally to raze and sweep away. As to the army of reserve act, that was but a little part of the question, and he would not advert to it then, as many other occasions would arise for discussing the merits of it. It had been in an early part of the debate compared, with much felicity of humour and illustration, both to a pump and an animal. There was one animal it put him in mind of, the animal in the fable of the "Boy and the goose," which they had all read. The goose daily produced a number of golden eggs, but the simpleton who owned it, wished to get possession of all the gold at once, and so he killed it. He would leave it to the House to make the application.

Mr. Balfour contended that the plan proposed by Mr. Pitt would be the most arbitrary and unconstitutional that could be conceived, and instead of its exposing men to be importuned, would, he feared, expose them to be dragooned into general service. He contended that the militia was a constitutional force which ought to be carefully cherished, and without meaning any disrespect to the army, he was of opinion that the militia was a constitutional check on the army. As to the army of reserve bill, he wished it was wholly repealed. It had been productive of much hardship and misery, as he had witnessed, and he hoped it would never be renewed. The plan of the right hon. Gentleman seemed calculated to produce all the evils of the army of reserve act without the plea of the necessity. He contended that the country was in such a state of preparation and defence, that to far from being afraid of invasion, they longed to meet the enemy.

Mr. Hawkins Browne was anxious that the House should go into a Committee on the bill.

The *Attorney General* said, that the pain he felt in obtruding himself on an unwilling audience (*there was a great cry for the question*), could only be equalled by the pain he should

should feel, on leaving that House, and laying down in his bed, if he did not resist the most uncharitable representation that ever had been given by one man of the sentiments of another. If the right hon. Gentleman on the bench above him (Mr. Canning) preserved any recollection of his former habits, if he knew how to appreciate the idea of friendship, and had ever called the right hon. Gentleman near him (Mr. Addington) by the name of friend, how could he place such a construction on his words as he had done? He did not conceive that his right hon. Friend ever did say, or meant to infer, that the plan of the right hon. Gentleman was calculated to introduce a system of torture and tyranny. He knew it was sometimes objected to Ministers, that they supported the same measures on different grounds. Where they acted from an union of council, that certainly was a good argument against them; but he could discover no good reason when they objected to and opposed a measure, as in this instance, that they should all do it on the same grounds. As he understood his right hon. Friend, he said that the army of reserve act had been originally a measure of necessity, and that one great objection of his to the continuance of it was, that it exposed men to be importuned into engaging for other service. A right hon. Gentleman opposite him (Mr. Windham) had said, that the zeal of the country pronounced the condemnation of Ministers. If he, or the friend (Mr. Fox) he had just quitted, should form part of the next Administration, as he presumed they looked forward to the possibility of it, the country would acquit them of any such condemnation; for, he believed, instead of being followed by the public zeal, they would be met by its scorn. Could that right hon. Gentlemen say, that the present state of Europe, or even of this country, could be attributed to the measures of Ministers? The hon. Gentleman had said, as an excuse for not discussing the propriety of suspending this act, that he would not interrupt the agreeable variety of the proceedings of Ministers. He really thought there had been as much reeling to and fro, on the part of the right hon. Gentleman; and that if they were inconsistent, nothing could be more inconsistent than the hon. Gentleman, for he was sure to meet them at every turn. He would not, at that late hour, go into the question. The object of Ministers in passing that act, was to get a large efficient force on the spur of the occasion. It had answered the end, and the operation could at present only produce inconvenience.

Mr.

Mr. Canning would not wilfully misinterpret any Gentleman, but he did conceive, and still conceived, that the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer intended to cast that precise censure on his right hon. Friend.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer—Sir, there was nothing I said, there was nothing in my thoughts, to warrant the interpretation of the right hon. Gentleman.

Sir John Wrottesley appealed to the Chair, and to the House, whether the whole tenor of the right hon. Gentleman's speech did not tend to throw every odium on the right hon. Gentleman above him.

The Speaker—Since I am appealed to, it is my duty to state, that it is the usage of this House, when a Member has explained his words, to accept that explanation.

Sir John Wrottesley objected to the suspension of the act, and said that the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer made the same use of the measure as he did of the right hon. Gentleman behind him, that was, as a boat to carry him over the ferry, which he discarded as soon as it answered his purpose.

Lord De Blaquiere defended the plan proposed by Mr. Pitt. It was a measure which, in his opinion, would raise the force required by the situation of the country, much sooner than that proposed by the Secretary at War. The noble Lord concluded with recommending the plan for raising men only for a limited time.

Sir R. Buxton described the evils of the army of reserve act in its operation, and supported the motion.

Mr. Jervis defended the conduct of Ministers, to whom he gave the credit of the spontaneous zeal of the country, in a considerable degree: they had shewn such wisdom, moderation, and love of the constitution, as to conciliate the affections of the country, which, he was confident, was in unison with their feelings and intentions.

Mr. Pitt restated his plan, which was to mitigate the severity of the army of reserve act, by having different hal-lots, and instead of throwing the whole burthen on one, to equalize it by exacting a small fine from those who, after being drawn, did not serve in person; and to allow bounty to those who chose to serve in person. Parishes would likewise be excused by allowing them to pay a small sum towards the general fund for recruiting, if they did not find their number of men.

To a question by Sir Robert Williams, whether the parishes would be relieved,

Mr

Mr. Yorke said they would, upon payment of the sums specified by the bill.

On the question being put, for the Speaker's leaving the chair, the numbers were,

Ayes, 240—Noes, 203.—Majority 37.

The House afterwards went into a Committee on the bill, and adjourned at two o'clock in the morning.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

THURSDAY, APRIL 26.

The Earls of Aylesbury and Seaforth and Lord Clive took the oaths and their seats.

The Irish linen manufacturers' bill was read a third time, passed, and sent to the Commons.

The other bills on the table were forwarded.—Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THURSDAY, APRIL 26.

The House ballotted for a Select Committee to try the merits of the Liskeard election petitions.

The following were the names on the reduced list :

Richard Gervas Ker, Esq.	Earl Loftus,
James Martin Lloyd, Esq.	Matthew Ruffel, Esq.
Joseph Holden Strutt, Esq.	Sir Matthew Bloxam, Knt.
Henry Juddrell, Esq.	The hon. C. Kinnaird,
The right hon. W. Windham,	Charles M. Ormsby, Esq.
John Prinsep, Esq.	Robert Hall Lee, Esq.
Sir Robert Barclay, Bart.	

NOMINEES.

The hon. C. J. Fox W. Sturges Bourne, Esq.

Mr. Irving, from the office of the Inspector General of imports and exports, presented the accounts which the House had ordered to be furnished from that office.

Mr. Owen, from the India House, presented an account of the dates of dispatches, &c. which had also been previously ordered, as far as they could be made out.—Ordered to be printed, and to lie on the table.

On the report of the Committee to whom the petition of the

the London clergy was referred, leave was given to bring in a bill pursuant to the prayer thereof.

Sir J. Newport moved that a Committee should be appointed to inquire into the state of the poor laws as far as they extend to Ireland, to make a provision for lunatics and idiots, and to report their observations and opinion to the House. He did this with a view to shew the people of Ireland that they were objects of the sincere care and regard of the Legislature.

The Committee was appointed to consist of Sir J. Newport, Mr. Foster, Mr. Corry, and all Members serving for Ireland who may think proper to attend.

On the motion of Lord W. Russell, the House went into a Committee on the statute duty bill. When the House resumed, the report was brought up, and the bill ordered to be read a third time the next day.

The House went into a Committee on the Newfoundland ships bill. The clauses were agreed to without amendment; the report was received when the House resumed, and the bill was read a third time and passed.

The House went into a Committee on the army of reserve suspension bill.

Mr. Secretary Yorke considered it fit that some reasonable fine should be levied on the counties which were deficient in supplying their quotas according to the former act. The tribunal to which he should propose to refer the returns made under that act, was to consist of the Deputy Lieutenants and the magistrates for the county, and their report should, of course, be sent up to the War Office. The right hon. Secretary explained the various other provisions of the bill. It was then read in the Committee, and several amendments were made. The House having resumed, the report was brought up, and ordered to be received the next day.

The accounts of outstanding Exchequer bills at various periods from April 1798 to the present year, were presented and ordered to lie on the table.

The eight million Exchequer bills bill, and the million and a half Exchequer bills bill, the English and Irish militia pay bills, and the militia officers' bill, were reported, and ordered to be read a third time the next day.—Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

FRIDAY, APRIL 27.

Counsel was heard for the respondents in the Scotch appeal, Hunter and others against the Earl of Kinnoul and others. Further consideration postponed till Wednesday.

The eight millions Exchequer bills bill, one million and a half Exchequer bills bill, and the other bills passed in the Commons, were brought from that House and read a first time.

The other bills on the table were forwarded ; after which the House adjourned till Monday.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

FRIDAY, APRIL 27.

Mr. Johnson, from the Chief Secretary's office of Ireland, presented at the bar certain papers pursuant to a former order of the House, relative to the numbers of Irish militia who had volunteered to extend their services to this country ; which were ordered to lie on the table.

The eight millions Exchequer bills bill, and the one million and a half Exchequer bills bill were read a third time, and passed.

The English militia and Irish militia pay bills were read a third time and passed.

Mr. Vanfittart moved, that there be laid before the House an account of the 500,000*l.* voted for Ireland for the service of the year 1803, which was ordered accordingly.

The adjutant and serjeant majors' allowance bill was read a third time and passed.

Mr. Corry presented a petition for leave to bring in a bill to enable the Archbishop of Dublin to sell the official palace to Government, for the purpose of making barracks.—Leave was accordingly given, and a Committee appointed to prepare and bring in a bill conformably to the said petition.

Sir John Anderson brought up the report of the Committee appointed to take into consideration the petition from the company of bakers, which was ordered to lie on the table.

Mr. Foster complained that certain accounts relating to the currency of Ireland had not yet been laid before the Committee

Committee appointed to take that subject into consideration.

Mr. Corry was glad that he would now have it in his power to satisfy the right hon. Gentleman and the Committee in that respect, as he could assure him that they would be presented the next day, many of them having come over that day.

The Committee on the Irish revenue regulation bill was deferred till Friday.

The Secretary at War brought up the report of the Committee appointed to take into consideration the amendments of the Lords in the volunteer bill: and having moved that the report be taken into consideration, a conversation took place between Mr. Whitbread, Mr. Secretary Yorke, and the Secretary at War, when

The *Speaker* begged leave to inform the House, that according to precedents the proper mode of the House's signifying their dissent from any amendments made by the Lords was to appoint a Committee to draw up reasons for their dissent, to be presented to the Lords, unless they proposed to reject a bill *in toto*, which could only be done, he apprehended, in bills of supply or of ways and means. It remained, however, for the House to consider whether they would reject the bill *in toto*, or adopt the measure prescribed in such instances, by the precedents of the House.

The report was then ordered for consideration on Monday next, and on the motion of Mr. Whitbread, ordered to be printed.

A message was received from the Lords announcing their concurrence with the Irish linen manufacture regulation bill, and some private bills.

Admiral Berkeley stated that he had repeatedly come down to the House, in hopes of seeing some one of the Lords of the Admiralty in his place, that he might have an opportunity of putting a question which he thought of some importance. The question was relative to the return of marines. He wished to know if the 15,000 marines, were to be considered as over and above the 84,000 that had been returned? If Ministers were not prepared for this question, he hoped that some of the Lords of the Admiralty would come down to answer it.

Mr. Tierney expressed his readiness to inform the hon. Admiral. The 15,000, he could assure the hon. Admiral, were exclusive of the other. The one is stated, the right hon.

Gentleman added, from the Navy Office, and the other from the weekly returns; but the two are to be added, making in all upwards of a hundred thousand.

Mr. Fox rose to inform the House, that as he understood from authority that no satisfactory answer would be given to the question he had proposed to put to Ministers that night respecting the transports that were taken up for conveying the troops from Hanover to this country, he would then give notice, that on Wednesday next he would formally move for the production of such papers as related to this subject, with the dates particularly of taking up those transports, the dates of their sailing, and the terms of their engagement.

Mr. Addington saw no good reason for hurrying a motion of that nature, and would therefore wish the hon. Gentleman to postpone it till some other day.

Mr. Fox did not see that any reasonable objection could be entertained to the motion or to the day of which he had given notice.

IRISH LOAN.

The House having resolved itself into a Committee of Ways and Means,

Mr. Corry said it was not his intention to trespass on the time of the House more than a few minutes. During the progress of the session a great part of the supplies for Ireland had been voted, and his object for rising at present, was to state that the permanent charges on the consolidated fund of Ireland and the votes of supply having considerably exceeded the ways and means for answering them, it had been thought advisable to propose to raise a part of the ways and means by a loan in Ireland to the amount of 1,250,000*l*. It was impossible for him at that moment to go into a general statement of the charges upon Ireland for the whole year; for though many of them were voted, yet others were not: he must, therefore, defer such general statement until the whole were voted. At present he should only state as part of such ways and means, the loan which had been agreed for to the amount before mentioned in Ireland, subject to the approbation of Parliament. This loan was bid for in the five per cent stock, and the interest, according to the terms, was to commence on the 25th of March last, and the discount of five per cent was allowed on anticipated payments according to the practice in this country. On the 20th of April the loan was contracted for in Dublin; for every 100*l*., 112*l*. 7*s*. 3*d*.
stock

stock was granted. The money to be raised therefore, being 1,250,000*l.* the stock created would be 1,404,000*l.* The interest to be paid for each 100*l.* received was 5*l.* 12*s.* 4*d.* which with the sinking fund of 12 per cent. would make the whole annual charge, 84,271*l.* On the day of the bidding, the five per cent. stock in Ireland was at 90, and the loan was taken at 89; that is to say within one per cent. of the market price of the stocks that day. Having thus stated the terms of the loan, which he hoped would prove satisfactory, it was unnecessary for him to occupy the attention of the House any longer, except merely to remark that on the day the loan was made in Ireland at 89, the Irish five per cents. in London were only 80½, which certainly was a most astonishing difference, and clearly proved that the loan was made on terms advantageous to the public. He then concluded (after giving notice that he hoped next week to be able to go into the general statement of the ways and means for Ireland) with moving the usual resolution respecting the loan, which was agreed to.

ARMY ESTIMATES.

On the motion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the House resolved into a Committee of Supply, and the different estimates relative to the army being referred to the Committee,

The *Secretary at War* rose to move the necessary grants under the head of military services. The estimates now to be voted were, he said, the supplementary ones, and, with the exception of the charges for the militia of Ireland, not now included, the estimates for the present year were of the same nature as those of the last. The estimate for the pay and clothing of volunteer was 730,000*l.* The rest were much as before, and the only thing added, was for foreign corps. With respect to the augmentation of the army already proposed, by an addition of new battalions, it had been stated so fully to the House on a former night, as to render any detail on the subject now unnecessary. There are, besides, certain additional corps for the service of both Great Britain and Ireland, the estimate of which, for the former, was 130,000*l.* and that for the latter 70,000*l.* The only other item, which it seemed particularly necessary to notice, was the foreign corps. In the last year, the House voted for the continuance of several foreign regiments in our service, as De Rolle's, the Queen's German regiment, and some others; the only addition now
is,

is, the Queen's German legion, consisting of 5,000 Hanoverian troops, of which number 4000 are already raised, and the remainder expected to be completed in a little time, all disciplined men, and well used to service. The whole of these foreign troops together, would make 7 or 8,000 men, and those the only ones included in the present estimate. The next item on which there was a difference from the estimate of last year, was the allowance to innkeepers in Scotland, and which the nature of the public services, and the circumstances of that country considered, he trusted would appear reasonable. The rest of the items were in the ordinary course, and not requiring any particular observation. Under the head of barracks in Ireland was 461,800*l*. The next item was for the new military establishments in this country, the Royal Military College and Asylum; the one for educating young men, the sons of officers, desirous of a regular military education, with a view to the service; the other, for the children of soldiers, who may have fallen in the defence of their country. The sum necessary to complete the buildings was 32,600*l*. In the latter establishment, it was intended to provide for 1000 children, but the number as yet did not exceed 600; and the former required some new arrangements;—under its present regulations it was required that 40*l*. should be paid with each pupil indiscriminately; but this, even though a small sum, was found to be incompatible with the circumstances of many deserving officers who were desirous of benefiting by the institution; and, therefore, it was intended to open the establishment upon a scale of expence, proportioned to the circumstances of the parents, and to educate gratis those who could not afford to pay any thing: beside, as it was desirable to add the advantages of an ordinary education to those of a military one, it was intended to accommodate both under the same roof, and provide apartments for masters, &c. and form a similar arrangement to that at Great Marlow. There was one more head, under which the expence was indeed of very considerable magnitude; namely, that of barracks. But though the sum was undoubtedly large, yet when it was considered, that by such an arrangement there would be a very considerable saving under the head of lodging-money, barrack-hire, stabling, &c. he trusted the saving would in a very great degree warrant the expence. The hire of barracks in the last year already cost 1,250,000*l*.; and in the barracks already built, there was accommodation for 26,000 troops in cantonments along the coast, and the estimate

timate for the new barracks was 1,534,000*l.* including premises purchased. The contract was now before the House, and was framed from a plan which met the approbation of military men of the first experience. The works were to be subject to the control of a barrack-master, who was to judge and check every proceeding of the contractor, and without whose certificate no money was to be paid to any contractor. Besides this the public would be completely guarded against any loss for waste of time, extraordinary wages, or debts contracted, as the work was to be measured, and both that and the materials paid for at the ordinary rate of the vicinage where such buildings were to be erected, unless it were in very remote situations where extraordinary expedition should be required, and where it would be but just to make a reasonable allowance, when the contractor was unavoidably subjected to extraordinary expence, either in conveying his men to a considerable distance, or paying an extraordinary price for materials or labour. Having stated thus much for the satisfaction of the Committee, he should be ready to give any further explanation which Gentlemen might require. He concluded with moving the first resolution.

Mr. Francis inquired if, in the present estimates, the forces in India were comprehended?

The Secretary at War replied, that they would appear by the accounts to be included.

Mr. Francis remarked on the inconsistency in the reasoning of the right hon. Gentleman in respect to the barracks. The expence had exceeded all reasonable computation, and deserved the serious attention of the House; the extent of the charge did not at all correspond with the expedients stated to have been resorted to for the purposes of public economy, and if some satisfactory explanation were not given, he should think it right to submit the abuses which had prevailed to the attention of the House.

The Secretary at War said, among the more weighty charges on the barrack establishment was the construction of barracks on the coast; and it was conceived that this measure, on a variety of accounts, would save a very considerable expence in adjacent encampments. It is rather premature to give any decisive opinion on the total charge in this important and necessary service, as the accounts are not yet made up, by which that opinion must be guided. With regard to the execution of the works, if the right hon. Gentleman entertains any doubts on that subject, it would

would be candid if he would advert to some particulars from which those doubts originate; he confessed he had understood nothing of the kind from the Barrack Office, and he trusted that the hon. Gentleman, on further inquiry, would discover there was no just ground of complaint. The payments in that department were conducted with the greatest regularity, at the same time securing the interest of the public, and providing for the exigencies of the contractor. The terms on which the engagements are made, admit the latter to the benefit of instalments, and he is also entitled to money on account, in the progress of his undertaking; but 12 per cent. is retained until the conclusion of the business, to apply to any defect that may be discovered either in the quantity of the materials, or the structure of the edifice. No payment is made excepting it be authorized by a certificate of the officers appointed to survey the buildings, and bad materials are ordered to be removed, and unsubstantial erections to be pulled down. No day-work is charged at a fixed price, but the price is regulated by the rate of labour paid in the respective counties where the service is performed. With these precautions, it is not possible to suppose much neglect can arise, or that the public money is employed without a corresponding advantage from its application.

Colonel Craufurd signified that he should on some future day take an opportunity of exposing the neglect of Ministers in every branch of the expenditure for military purposes.

Mr. IV. Smith lamented the magnitude of the burthen in the barrack department, and considered that, contrary to what the right hon. Gentleman had stated, the present plan was subject to objections, both on account of the public and the individual. He would mention a single fact, by which it would appear the interest of the last was not very sedulously consulted. A small contractor delivered in his account, and was surprised to find a gross deduction made in it. He applied to the Barrack-office to be informed of the particular items to which the deduction referred; it was in vain that he remonstrated; he could obtain no explanation, and he was at last told, that if he would not take the amount thus reduced, he might bring his action. Although the deduction exceeded the amount of his profit, yet the whole affair was so small that he could obtain no redress by bringing an action at the expence of 50*l.* or 60*l.* The hon.

Member

Member was of opinion, that the large discretionary powers given to the principal barrack-officers, was neither consistent with public policy or private convenience; but at least it would be expected, where they have such extensive confidence reposed, that they would use it with some moderation, and not only avoid injustice, but the appearance of it, by explaining to a creditor their objection to his claim.

The *Secretary at War* explained, that the general character of the officers to whom the barrack department was assigned, would incline him to avoid hastily concluding that they were culpable in the particular to which the hon. Gentleman adverted. All the corrected accounts he had seen in the course of his official duties, had the ground of objection stated on the face of the account against the item to which it applied. If the hon. Gentleman would privately communicate the circumstance of the grievance to which he adverted, the matter should be examined, and any just ground of complaint should be immediately removed.

The following resolutions on the amounts to be devoted to particular services were then put and agreed to:—

For Supernumerary Officers	£: 36,464
Increased rates of subsistence to Soldiers and Inn-keepers	455,464
British Officers on Half-pay	189,268
Chelsea Hospital	245,000
Reduced Half-pay Officers on the British Establishment	5,665
Militia Officers	50,000
Chelsea Pensioners, in and out	245,045
Barracks for Ireland	461,801
Hospitals	22,500
Volunteer Cavalry	500,000
Further charge for Volunteer Corps	570,000
Foreign Corps	582,216
Military College	11,282
Military Asylum	32,600
Augmentation of the Military Forces in Ireland	200,000
Garrison Service in the West Indies	8,880
Barrack Department of Great Britain	2,182,932
Recruiting	98,625
Increase for the Commissary General of Stores (not usually in the Estimate)	330,000

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* observed, that the excess last year in the extraordinaries of the army would not ap-

pear, under the existing circumstances, at all extravagant, when he stated it be 339,000*l*. He then moved, that it is the opinion of this Committee, that there be applied to the extraordinary expences of the army for the year 1804 :

In Great Britain	£. 1,400,000
In Ireland	600,000
Expences of the Journals of the House, and other incidental charges.	33,543
Alien Offices	8,587
Repairs of Military Roads in North Britain	5,000
Board of Agriculture	2,000
Extraordinary Expences of Prosecutions.	3,309
Civil Establishment in Canada	8,050
in Nova Scotia	7,165
in New Brunswick	4,660
in Prince Edward's Island	2,800
in Cape Breton	2,040
in Newfoundland	1,715
in Bermuda	580
in Dominica	600
in New South Wales	10,069
Improvements in the two Houses of Parliament, and in the Speaker's House	12,345
Public Record Offices.	741
Repairs in the King's Bench Prison	2,610
For the Lazaretto in Kent, under the act	30,000

These resolutions being put and agreed to,

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* again rose—The only remaining resolution I shall now submit to the attention of the Committee, relates to what has been called the Caledonian Canal, intended to connect the eastern and western seas by Inverness to Fort William, for which the sum of 25,000*l*. has been already granted. It will be immediately seen that this is a concern of too much magnitude to be undertaken by individuals. This vast interfection of the country is not to be on the contracted plan of ordinary canals for inland navigation ; it is intended to be conducted on a superior scale, and to admit the passage of frigates of 32 guns. There are many local considerations connected with this subject, which should not escape the attention of the Committee. In the year 1801, the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury directed a survey to be taken of that part of the Highlands. The spring and ensuing summer were employed on this duty. During the last session the report was

was made, and the House in consequence adopted the measure. Commissioners were then under the same authority appointed, who pursued their inquiries with great diligence and ability, and they were assisted by a gentleman perfectly conversant in undertakings of this kind, from whom they derived the most valuable information. The report was directed to two principal objects; the importance, and the practicability of the work. The expenses was stated at from 4 to 500,000*l*. The zeal of the country has been so great to forward the project, that in many instances the land for the canal has been offered free of all expence. Among the motives, I must not omit to notice the considerable emigrations from the Highlands, which this improvement is calculated to prevent. I beg it may not be supposed that this emigration is in any degree to be attributed to the neglect of the great landed proprietors. A variety of causes have conduced to incline the Highlanders to abandon their native soil, and it is the duty of Government, as much as possible, to remove these, that this gallant and valuable body of men may be disposed to listen to the dictates of their own patriotic feelings. This great national work will provide employment for a great number of the people of that country, and it is expected that the blessings of commerce and of the arts will emanate from the same spring, and diffuse not only the means of bare subsistence, but the comforts, conveniencies, and luxuries of life. I think I should detain the House improperly, were I to dwell longer on the importance of this measure. I shall therefore conclude with moving, that 50,000*l*. be granted to promote the inland navigation of Scotland, by a canal passing Inverness and Fort William, and connecting the eastern and western seas.

The resolution being agreed to, the House was resumed, and on the motion being put from the chair, the report of the Committee of Supply was ordered to be received the next day.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer gave notice, that he would move, on Monday se'nnight, that the report of his Majesty's civil list be referred to the Committee of Supply.

Mr. Vanlittart brought up various accounts, which were ordered to lie on the table.

The accounts of the exports and imports, presented by Mr. Irving, were ordered to be printed.

The standing orders were then read, and the House adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

SATURDAY, APRIL 28.

Mr. Corry brought up the report of the Committee to which the petition for the sale of the Archbishop of Dublin's palace had been referred. Referred to a Committee of the whole House on Monday.

A petition was presented from the debtors confined in Dorchester gaol, praying relief. Ordered to lie on the table.

Mr. Alexander brought up the reports of the Committees of Supply and Ways and Means. The resolutions were severally agreed to, and bills ordered accordingly.

On the motion of Mr. Secretary Yorke, the militia officers' completion bill was read a third time, and passed.

Adjourned till Monday.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

MONDAY, APRIL 30.

Two bills were brought up from the Commons, and read a first time.

Earl Spencer moved for an address to his Majesty, for the production of the dates of the dispatches forwarded by Government to the Governor of St. Helena, prior to and succeeding the date of his Majesty's message of the 8th March.

Lord Hobart suggested that the usual mode of moving for papers would be the more proper, which was, that the proper officer be ordered to lay before the House, &c. To such a motion he had no objection. The noble Earl shaped his motion according to the suggestion, and it was agreed to.

DEFENCE OF THE COUNTRY.

Lord Hawkbury, previous to the order of the day being read for their Lordships to be summoned on the notice of the motion respecting the state of the defence of the country, rose and requested that the noble Marquis would consent to postpone the motion for a few days. The reasons which had induced him on the part of his Majesty's Government to make this request were of so peculiar a nature, that his duty would not permit him to state to the House
more

more fully the grounds of them. He could however assure the House, that they were such as to authorize him in making the request.

The *Marquis of Stafford* conceived the noble Secretary of State would not have moved the postponement of a motion which was of the utmost importance to the country, unless he had some very sufficient reasons to adduce. It was far from his wish to press the motion on that day.

Lord Grenville declared, that it would have afforded him more satisfaction, if the noble Secretary of State had communicated to the House the nature of those circumstances which induced him to request of his noble Friend to postpone the motion he intended bring forward on that day. On such important and delicate occasions, it was usual for persons standing in the situation of the noble Lord to be more explicit. If the delay solicited was for the purpose of suiting his particular convenience, although that certainly was not such a ground for deferring the motion of his noble Friend as could be stated to be a very strong one, yet he for one was not inclined to refuse any reasonable accommodation to the noble Lord; but if the reasons which induced the noble Secretary of State to call for the delay of a few days, rested upon higher considerations, it would be better that their Lordships should know that such was the fact. Let those grounds be explicitly stated, let it be fairly avowed that such were the motives that have operated to request this postponement, and he was persuaded, that nothing would appear on the part of opposition to impede his Majesty's paternal efforts to appoint such an Administration as would best provide for the honour, the interests, and the security of the state. He would not oppose the postponement of his noble Friend's motion for a few days; and as he thought the noble Lord incapable of trifling with the feelings of the House, or the feelings of the country, he would not only concur in his request, but propose that their Lordships should adjourn to that particular day to which his noble Friend was requested to defer his motion.

Lord Hawkebury thought that, after having stated that peculiar circumstances existed, which rendered it highly advisable that the noble Marquis should defer his motion to a future day, it was not very candid on the part of any noble Lord, considering the situation in which he stood, to call on him for an explanation of those circumstances. He would state again to their Lordships, and he would state it not

not only upon his official credit, but upon his character as a man, that the circumstances he alluded to were neither light nor trivial, but weighing sufficiently upon his mind to induce him to make the application he did to the noble Marquis. He could not concur with the noble Baron as to the propriety of an adjournment; he saw no necessity for it. There was nothing in the state of the country, or of public affairs, to justify such a measure; on the contrary, it would be productive of extreme inconvenience, should the whole course of public business be stopped, as it most certainly would be, if the proposition of the noble Baron were adopted. He had said every thing that he thought necessary, upon every consideration of public prudence, to induce the noble Marquis to postpone his motion; if he should not succeed, it would be the subject of regret to him, and in that alternative, he would not hesitate to meet the noble Marquis, and to enter fully upon the subject.

The *Earl of Carlisle* wished that the noble Secretary had spoken more plainly and explicitly, as to what his reasons were for requesting his noble Relative to postpone his motion. He knew but one circumstance which ought to weigh with the noble Marquis, and the rest of their Lordships, to cause the postponement of the great question that it was intended to submit to them; a circumstance which he was persuaded would send every noble Lord, and every man in the House, home contented and rejoiced, and that was, the certainty that his Majesty's Ministers were to retire from the situations they filled at present. He was inclined to take the sense of the House upon the motion of his noble Friend.

Lord Hawkebury remarked, that as the noble Marquis had not in fact made any motion, it was competent to him either to postpone or discharge the notice of the motion he had given.

Earl Fitzwilliam coincided in opinion with the Earl of Carlisle, and wished for some specific declaration on the part of Ministers.

The *Lord Chancellor* objected to the motion of the noble Lord (Grenville) for the House to adjourn, on the ground that private business would be much inconvenienced. It was also necessary, that their Lordships should sit for the purpose of passing money bills; there were other bills unconnected with the subject of the noble Marquis's motion, which it was highly necessary should be expedited, and on which their Lordships could entertain no difference of opinion. On these grounds,

grounds, from a sense of duty to his country, as well as a sense of duty to his King, he would oppose the motion of the noble Lord.

Lord Harrowby supported the opinions of the noble Lord (Grenville) with respect to the necessity of discussing the noble Marquis's motion; and thought his Majesty's Ministers should have distinctly stated the circumstances which led them to request the delay.

Lord Melville trusted that should it be the pleasure of the House to consent to the noble Secretary's request, and the noble Marquis in course postpone his motion, without an adjournment, that no business, on which any difference of opinion could arise, would be brought forward.

The *Marquis of Abercorn* admitted it to be the privilege of noble Lords to make motions whenever they thought proper; the noble Lord opposite (Grenville) was in the habit of not only making motions, but also of forcing those of his noble friends upon the House: for his part he (as no doubt many other noble Lords had done on the present occasion) came up from the country to attend the noble Marquis's motion; but the reasons which had been adduced by the noble Secretary were sufficient to satisfy his mind for the postponement, and he should vote against the adjournment.

Lord Grenville wished Ministers to inform the House to what day in particular they desired his noble Friend's motion should stand over. If it was for a longer period than three or four days, he should most strongly oppose the delay. Their Lordships had been summoned for that day, and he considered it as disrespectful on the part of Ministers to desire the postponement, and that merely on the suggestion of a noble Lord, unsupported by any substantial ground whatever. A noble and learned Lord had stated, that if the House should adjourn, much inconvenience would accrue to private individuals. However true that might be, he thought his Majesty's Ministers were bound to pledge themselves to the House, that no business of a public nature, on which any difference of opinion could arise, should be brought forward during the delay, if their Lordships should consent to that delay; and if on the present occasion the noble Secretary refused to give the reasons for postponing his noble friend's motion, he should at least give a pledge, that on a future occasion those reasons should be openly and fairly stated. On no other grounds could he give his consent to the delay.

Lord Hawkebury remarked that this was the first time, and a melancholy picture indeed it afforded of the times, that a
faction

faction was so strenuous in pressing a motion upon the House. (*A loud cry of hear! hear! from the opposite side of the House.*) When any noble Lord had pledged the responsibility of his situation, which he did not mean to urge, so much as the pledge which he had just given of the credit due to his private character, that at present, the reasons which operated with his Majesty's Ministers to request the delay, would hereafter be explained satisfactorily to the House; he conceived, such a pledge in honour should be considered as binding, and therefore he was ill prepared to expect such an opposition, when in candour and liberality he had a right to the indulgence of the House. He could not see any good grounds for the adjournment, and therefore should oppose it.

Lord Mulgrave hoped that his Majesty's Ministers did not mean "to keep the word of promise to the ear, and break it to the hope." The noble Lord was of opinion, that after such a length of time had elapsed since the notice of the motion intended to be made by the noble Marquis, no public business should have a prior discussion. He was surprised to hear the noble Secretary attach the name of "faction" to any of their Lordships. He would ask why those noble Lords who opposed the delay, were denominated a faction? For this reason, because they opposed, and would not give in to a fallacy, (*a loud cry of hear! hear!*) because they were not inclined to give credit to a bare assertion, made in gentle and mild terms by the noble and candid Secretary, (*hear! hear!*)—Unless Ministers would pledge themselves that the noble Marquis's motion should have the priority of all other public business, he should oppose the delay.

After some explanation between Lords Hawkesbury and Grenville,

The Marquis of Stafford proposed that his motion should stand for Friday.

The *Earl of Carlisle* objected to the delay, unless Ministers would pledge themselves to state the grounds of the application on some future day.

Lord Hawkesbury could not consent to enter into any such engagement for the reasons he had already advanced, namely, that it would be incompatible with his public duty.

Some further conversation ensued, and at length the Marquis of Stafford's motion was agreed to.

Their Lordships were ordered to be summoned for Friday.

Lord Hobart gave notice of a motion that he intended to submit to their Lordships on Wednesday, on which he was satisfied no difference of opinion could prevail. It was for

for an acknowledgment of the services performed by those meritorious officers who signalized themselves in the late transactions in India, which had contributed so essentially to the glory and honour of this country.

Lord Grenville agreed in opinion with the noble Lord, and their Lordships were ordered to be summoned for that day.—The House then adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, APRIL 30.

Mr. Serjeant Best brought up a bill for the relief of certain incumbents in the City of London. Read a first time, and ordered for a second reading.

Mr. Hawkins Browne brought up a bill for making and maintaining a navigable canal between Inverness and Fort William in Scotland. Read a first time.

Mr. Henry Lascelles brought up a bill for the better regulation of the woollen cloth manufacture in the county of York; which after a few observations from Mr. H. Lascelles, Mr. Wilberforce, and Mr. Brooke, was read a first time, and ordered for a second reading.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer moved, that there be laid before the House an estimate of the probable annual produce of the contributions on profits arising from property, trades, and offices, so far as the same can be made out. Ordered. A person from the Treasury then presented the account at the bar. Ordered to lie on the table and to be printed.

Mr. Dillon, in consideration of the paramount importance of the business which the Chancellor of the Exchequer was to bring forward that day, postponed his motion relative to the exemption of Catholics in the Irish militia regiments that had volunteered their services to this country, from the penalties of the statute of Geo. I. to Thursday.

Lord Castlereagh presented accounts of the dates of the despatches sent by his Majesty's Ministers to the different presidencies in India. Ordered to lie on the table and to be printed.

Lord Castlereagh then gave notice, that he should on Wednesday call the attention of the House to the late brilliant successes of the British arms in India.

Mr. Secretary Yorke moved, that the order of the day for the further consideration of the Lords amendments to the volunteer corps bill be put off to Wednesday. Ordered.

Mr. Foster moved, that the petition of the linen manufacturers, &c. of Ireland be referred to a Committee of the whole House the next day. Ordered.

Mr. Foster brought up a bill to provide that certain public accounts for Ireland, be laid before the House annually, previous to a certain date. Read a first time; to be read a second time the next day.

BUDGET.

On the motion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the House went into a Committee to consider further of ways and means for raising the supply granted to his Majesty, and the accounts of the produce of the excise, customs, and war taxes, presented to the House this session, were referred to the said Committee.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* began by calling the attention of the Committee to the system which had been proposed last year, and which had appeared to meet with the general approbation of the House, namely, that of raising a very large proportion of the supplies for the public service within the year, by means of *war taxes*. This system had not only been attended with the beneficial consequences that had been particularly pointed out at the time it was adopted, but had been productive of other advantages of considerable importance. It had tended materially to lessen the pressure which had fallen upon the commerce of the country, in consequence of the renewal of war, by preventing so large a portion of the commercial capital of the country, as would otherwise have been necessary, from being applied to the public service by way of loan. Some embarrassment had, indeed, been experienced, but he hoped it was now nearly surmounted, and surmounted without any public interference or assistance. In a former instance such assistance had been found necessary, and had been wisely granted by the Legislature; but the repetition of such an interference in commercial transactions, was a proceeding so contrary to the true principles of trade, that it was in the highest degree satisfactory to find, that it had now been avoided by the exertion of the skill, the capital, and the resources, of the commercial body. In his statement last year, having assumed that the British proportion of the expences of the war might be taken
at

at 26,000,000*l.* he had conceived that if a sum of 10,000,000*l.* were raised by war taxes, in addition to the ordinary revenues of the state, not more than 6,000,000*l.* would remain to be provided by way of loan; and as the amount of the sinking fund exceeded that sum, the total of the public debt would be rather diminished than increased in the course of the year. In order to ensure a net annual addition of 10,000,000*l.* he had thought it his duty to propose taxes which he had stated as likely to produce 12½ millions; namely, 8,000,000*l.* by additional custom and excise duties and 4,500,000*l.* by a direct tax upon property. By the proceedings which took place in the House of Commons, a diminution was occasioned which he had estimated at about 1,200,000*l.* caused by a suspension of part of the excise on wine, and by various exemptions and abatements introduced into the duty on property. He had now the satisfaction of stating, that the net produce of the additional customs and excise, in the first half year of their collection, ending the 5th of January 1804, had been 2,221,000*l.*; to which sum, adding the amount of the duties charged and outstanding on the 5th of January 1804, the total would be no less than 4,380,000*l.*; at which rate, the yearly produce would amount to 8,778,000*l.* But as in this sum the duty on the stock in hand of wine and malt was included, and as a part of the foreign spirits charged with duty might be exported and receive drawback, he should think it necessary to reduce his estimate of their future annual produce to 8,200,000*l.* which sum would nearly agree with the estimate previously formed upon the average consumption of several years. With respect to the property tax, it would be recollected, that it had been originally stated to the House as likely to produce 4,500,000*l.* from which estimate a million was afterwards deducted, in consequence of the alteration which took place in the Committee. It now appeared, by the account laid upon the table, that the net produce of the property tax was calculated, by those best qualified to judge, at 4,800,000*l.* allowing for all the abatements which had taken place. This estimate was formed upon a calculation founded upon the returns already received, that the gross produce will be about 6,000,000*l.* From this gross produce, deductions are allowed to the amount of 1,200,000*l.* and if in the progress of the assessment they should prove less than this allowance, the net produce would proportionably exceed 4,800,000*l.* It was very satisfactory

to observe, that this tax would be charged on a net annual revenue of individuals to the amount of at least 125,000,000*l.* while the total upon which the income tax was charged did not exceed 80,000,000*l.*; and that the increase of assessments on commercial profits kept pace with that on visible property; as there were instances in which the profits returned for the whole of considerable towns, amounted to more than double the return to the commercial commissioners under the income tax. These circumstances he considered as warranting him in assuming that the net annual produce of the present war taxes would amount to between twelve and thirteen millions; but in the current year, on account of the delay which had taken place in the collection of the property tax, it was probable, that the sum due upon the assessment of the year 1803, together with at least one half of the assessment for 1804, would be paid into the Exchequer, making the receipt from that tax within the year to April 5, 1805, 7,000,000*l.* instead of 4,800,000*l.* And though he had been thought sanguine in estimating the receipt of all the war taxes, to the 5th of April 1804, at 4,500,000*l.* yet the total deficiency had proved to be not more than about 700,000*l.* although not much more than 300,000*l.* had on that day been received on the property tax; and it was evident, that if even a moderate proportion of that tax had been paid in, the estimate would have been greatly exceeded; and that in point of fact, on the day on which he was speaking (April 30), little more than 100,000*l.* remained to be made good. He next stated to the Committee, that notwithstanding the system of war taxes could not be expected to take full effect within the first year, yet the addition actually made to the public debt in the year 1803, amounted to no more than 3,590,000*l.* 3 per cent. stock. He next proceeded to observe, that great apprehensions had been expressed of the effect which the imposition of the war taxes might have upon the permanent revenue of the nation: nor could such apprehensions be deemed wholly groundless, especially when combined with the embarrassments occasioned to trade by the continuance of a doubtful negotiation, and afterwards by the blockade of the rivers of Germany, and other circumstances attending the recommencement of the war. It was, however, with the utmost pleasure that he was able to state, that these apprehensions had not been realized. By the accounts on the table it appeared

That

That the net produce of the permanent taxes existing in 1792, was in the year ending the 5th of January, 1803, (including corn bounties) - - - £.15,425,000

In the year ending January 5, 1804, it had been 14,984,000
But to this sum was to be added the amount of drawbacks paid out of the revenue of customs, for sugar exported in the preceding year; (such drawbacks not being payable till a certificate of the landing of the goods has been received from the British consul at the port to which they are exported) which occasioned the payment to exceed what would have been due upon the quantity actually exported within the year, by - - - - - 416,000

Making together - £. 5,400,000
an amount nearly the same as that of the preceding year. If, instead of the old permanent revenue existing previous to the late war, he should enter into a comparison of the produce of the whole of the permanent duties, the result would be still more favourable. The amount of all the permanent taxes

In January 1803, was £.28,209,000

In January 1804, - 30,676,000

Deducting, however, from both those sums the duties of 1802 and 1803, which in the first of those years did not exist, or were not in full collection, the amount in the former year would be 26,252,000l. and in the latter (including the sum abovementioned for the excess of drawback on sugar), 26,369,000l. It was necessary that he should also observe, that at the former period the total amount of the permanent duties of customs and excise outstanding was 4,055,000l. while at the latter it had increased to 5,167,000l. — He then proceeded to state the supply and ways and means of the present year :

SUPPLIES.

Navy (exclusive of 325,000 <i>l.</i> Ordnance sea ser- vices,			11,715,000
Army (England)	-	£. 15,256,000	
— (Ireland)	-	3,887,000	
			19,143,000
Ordnance (England)	-	3,693,000	
— (Ireland)	-	369,000	
			4,062,000
Vote of credit, including 800,000 <i>l.</i> for Ireland			2,500,000
Miscellaneous (England) including 40,000 <i>l.</i> for services not yet voted		617,000	
Ditto (Ireland) including 50,000 <i>l.</i> to be voted for civil contingencies		266,000	
			883,000
Irish permanent grants			400,000
Joint charge for England and Ireland			38,703,000
Add England separate charges.			
Toulonese ships	-	265,000	
Deficiency of malt duty	-	115,000	
American awards	-	412,000	
Exchequer bills, V. C. 1803	-	1,500,000	
			2,292,000
Total supplies			40,995,000
Deduct on account of Ireland as below			4,711,652
On account of England			36,283,348
Exchequer bills on aids 1804, to be replaced by a like amount on aids 1805.			
Per act 43 Geo. III. cap. 36. part of 4,000,000 <i>l.</i>			3,000,000
— 147. Bank	-		1,500,000
— 93. " " "	-		5,000,000
			9,500,000
2-17ths of the above sum of 38,703,000 <i>l.</i> are to be contributed by Ireland			4,553,294
Add for Ireland 2-17ths of 1,346,043 <i>l.</i> for civil list and other charges on the consoli- dated fund not relating to the public debt			158,358
			£ 4,711,652
			WATS

WAYS AND MEANS.

Malt duty	-	-	-	750,000
Duty on pensions, offices, &c.	-	-	-	2,000,000
Surplus ways and means, 1803	-	-	-	21,370,000
War taxes to the 5th of April 1805.				
Customs and excise	-	-	8,200,000	
Property tax	-	-	7,000,000	
				<hr/>
				15,200,000
Deduct wanting to complete grants	-	-	-	
1803	-	-	-	760,000
				<hr/>
				14,440,000
Additional war taxes	-	-	1,000,000	
				<hr/>
				15,440,000
Surplus consolidated fund to 5th April 1805	-	-	-	5,000,000
Lottery	-	-	-	250,000
Vote of credit	-	-	-	1,700,000
Loan	-	-	-	10,000,000
				<hr/>
				£ 36,510,000

He next called the attention of the Committee to the importance of carrying on, with the utmost vigour, the execution of a system of which experience had demonstrated the practicability, and evinced the beneficial effects. For this purpose, he recommended an addition of 1,000,000*l.* per annum to the war taxes; which he proposed should be raised by increasing the duty of excise on wine to the extent originally intended, of 20*l.* per ton; taking, however, 10 guineas only, as more convenient for calculation: and this, he observed, would give no pretence to the dealers for an increase of the retail price, as he believed it had been universally raised last year to an extent fully proportioned to the total duty. This would amount to about 200,000*l.* The remaining 800,000*l.* he proposed to raise by another addition of 12½ per cent. upon the consolidated customs, except those on exports and tonnage, and on the articles of wine, tea, and cotton wool. On the article of raisins only he should propose a double rate, as a substitute for an increase of the duty on sweets, which had usually accompanied an augmentation of the wine duty.—He next adverted to the loan contracted for the service of the present year. He stated, that he had that morning entered into a contract for a loan of 14,000,000*l.* for the service of the united kingdom; of which sum 10,000,000*l.*

10,000,000*l.* was to be provided for by Great Britain. The terms on which he had engaged were, to give for every 100*l.* in money, 100*l.* 3 per cent. reduced, and 82*l.* 3 per cent. consolidated annuities. These terms might be considered as fair, and even advantageous to the public, and at the same time likely to prove profitable to the contractors. The rate of interest would be 5*l.* 9*s.* 3*d.* per cent. amounting to 546,000*l.*; to which, adding the allowance for management, and a sinking fund of 1 per cent. the total annual charge would be 736,190*l.* This charge he proposed to provide for by a consolidation and simplification of the stamp duties, which were now extremely intricate and embarrassing, with some addition to the present rates of duty. The stamp duties might be divided into three principal branches: those on proceedings in courts of law, those which were applicable to instruments for the transfer and security of property, and those applicable to commercial transactions. In the first of these branches an intricacy and confusion prevailed, which often embarrassed the most skilful practitioners; and in the second, a very unequal pressure was occasioned by applying the rate of the duty, not to the value of the property transferred, but to the length of the instrument by which it was conveyed. He hoped, in the new arrangement, to remove the obscurity and difficulties which had been found so vexatious to the parties interested, and to render the burthen of taxation more equal, by applying to several other instruments, the same principle of progressive increase, according to the value of the property, which had been introduced with great success into the probate duty.—After a short recapitulation of his statements, he again impressed upon the Committee the urgent necessity of carrying the system which had been adopted into the most complete effect. For this purpose, he hoped the war taxes, at their present amount, would be found sufficient; for he could not consider the immense military expenditure rendered necessary in the present year, by the extensive preparations for our defence, as likely to continue to an equal amount. The sums voted for ordnance, volunteers, and barracks, in the present year, exceeded the grants for the same services, in either of the two last years of the late war, by more than 4,500,000*l.* on account of the extraordinary amount of arms and clothing provided for the volunteers, and of the numerous buildings carried on by the barrack department, the whole of which had been provided for in the supplies lately voted. Deducting this excess of 4,500,000*l.* which he considered as occasional,

occasional, from the amount of the loan, it would appear that an efficient war establishment might be maintained with a loan of 7,000,000*l.* estimating the war taxes at no more than their probable annual amount. But even supposing these extraordinary expences to be succeeded by others to an equal extent, the addition of 1,000,000*l.* annually to the war taxes, according to the plan of the present year, would, in the course of about three years, if the war should continue so long, raise the amount of the public income to such an extent as to leave a sum to be provided for by loan not greater than would be furnished by the sinking fund: from which period it was evident that the nation might persevere in the prosecution of the war with a diminishing instead of an increasing debt.

The question was then put on the first resolution, and agreed to.

Mr. Fox then rose, though conscious of the irregularity of adverting to the subject in the Committee, to put a question to the right hon. Gentleman opposite. A noble Lord high in his Majesty's service, had stated in another place (the House of Lords), that reasons existed, sufficient, in his opinion, to render it improper to discuss questions of importance, which might lead to a difference of opinion at present, in consequence of which an expected discussion had been postponed. As he had himself given notice of a motion for Wednesday, on a subject of very considerable importance, he wished to know whether the same considerations applied to discussions in that House. It would be for the convenience of Gentlemen to be informed on this head, and if the case were so, he should not be disposed to press his motion for a few days.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* replied, that the consideration to which the hon. Gentleman had adverted, undoubtedly applied to any motions in that House, of a description to lead to discussion and a difference of opinion. He therefore hoped, as the hon. Gentleman seemed not unwilling to defer his motion that he would abstain from bringing forward any question of that nature, and on the part of his Majesty's Government assured the House, that they would equally avoid bringing forward any measure that might lead to such difference of opinion.

Mr. Fox acquiesced in the wish to have his motion put off for a few days, but hoped the time would be short, and

claimed priority for his motion when the existing reasons for delay should cease.

Lord Levison Gower expressed a wish, that his Majesty's Ministers should defer the third reading of the army of reserve suspension bill, which stood for the next day, as that was a question that would necessarily lead to a discussion, and a difference of opinion.

Mr. Secretary Yorke consented to put off the third reading of that bill, but trusted the House would feel no objection to proceed with the consideration of the Lords' amendments to the volunteer bill on Wednesday.

Lord Porchester, on the same grounds with *Mr. Fox*, put off his motion (relative to dispatches to the Governor of the island of Ceylon), which stood for Thursday next.

Mr. Calcraft was also desirous to wave for a few days the motion of which he had given notice, relative to an additional allowance for pay and clothing of volunteer corps. He trusted, however, that the right hon. Secretary would not persist in his wish to proceed with the consideration of the Lords' amendments to the volunteer corps bill, because that was a measure precisely of the class, which would be likely to lead to serious discussion.

Mr. Secretary Yorke had no wish about it at all.—(A laugh.)

The other resolutions were then agreed to, and the House having been resumed, the report was ordered to be received the next day, and the Committee to sit again on Wednesday.

The House went into a Committee on the report of the petition of his Grace the Archbishop of Dublin. The report to be received the next day.

Mr. VanSittart moved, that there be laid before the House an account of the drawbacks allowed to common brewers, under the 42d of the King, distinguishing the quarters. Ordered. The other orders of the day were then disposed of.—Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

TUESDAY, MAY 1.

Counsel was heard for the respondents in the Chancery appeal *Richardsons v. the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge*.

The

The *Earl of Suffolk* stated that it was his intention, had the debate proceeded the preceding day, to have made a motion for the better disciplining and officering the volunteers previous to calling them out on actual duty. This step was at present in the act of being carried into effect, and if persisted in, in their present state of discipline, he thought would be attended with bad rather than beneficial consequences.

The eight million Exchequer bills bill, the one million and a half Exchequer bills bill, the militia officers bill, &c. went through Committees, and were ordered to be reported the next day.

Lord Hobart postponed his motion of thanks to the Marquis Wellesley, &c. till Thursday.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TUESDAY, MAY 1.

The ballot for the Committee to try the merits of the Stirling election stood fixed for this day: but ninety-five Members only being present, the House adjourned till the next day.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 2.

Counsel were heard in the Scotch appeal, *Hunter v. the Earl of Kinnoul*, &c. Farther consideration postponed till Monday.

The eight millions and one million and a half Exchequer bills bills, and the other bills which went through a Committee the preceding day, were read a third time and passed.

The other bills on the table being forwarded in their several stages, the House adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 2.

The report of the budget was brought up. The resolutions were all agreed to, and bills ordered.

The following Members were appointed by ballot to try the merits of the Stirling election:

John

John Osborne, Esq.
 The right hon G. Rose
 Thomas Thornon, Esq.
 James Farquhar, Esq.
 Francis Gregor Esq
 J. Buller (of Exeter), Esq.
 Sir Robert Peel, Bart.

David Pearson, Esq.
 The hon G. H. L. Dundas
 W. Dickenson, Esq
 Thomas Babington, Esq.
 Charles W. W. Wynne, Esq.
 Sir Charles Talbot.

NOMINEES

{ Thomas Creevey, Esq.
 { James Graham, Esq

The consideration of the state of affairs in India was postponed to the next day; the motion on the slave trade was deferred till next week; the report on the Lords' amendments to the volunteers bill was put off till Monday, the Aylesbury election bill till Friday, the motion respecting prize agency till Monday, the Liskeard election Committee till the next day se'nning, the Irish public accounts bill till the next day, the consideration of the Irish linen trade petition till Tuesday, and the army of reserve suspension bill till the next day.

On the motion of Mr. Foster, it was ordered that the Committee to whom the course of exchange with Ireland had been referred, should have leave to report their minutes to the House from time to time.

A message was brought down from the upper House, which stated that their Lordships had agreed to the two loan bills, the militia clothing bill, the militia subalterns allowance bill, the Newfoundland ships bill, the City of Dublin watch bill, and three others of a more private nature.

Mr. Williams presented the sixth report of the Committee of naval inquiry, which was ordered to be printed and to lie on the table.

Accounts were presented from the office of inspector general of imports and exports, which were also ordered to be printed and to lie on the table.

Sir G. Cornwall presented a petition from the debtors confined in Hereford gaol, praying relief. Ordered to lie on the table. Adjourned.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME, 1803-4.

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